

# THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

INSIDE

Dixiecrats: 1948 Democrats, defenders of racist lynchocracy

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VOL. 67/NO. 1 JANUARY 13, 2003

## Thousands in Los Angeles protest mass arrest by INS

Demand release of Iranians, others jailed as they lined up to register

BY NAN BAILEY

LOS ANGELES—Chanting “Free our people now!” several thousand angry protesters, mostly Iranians, demonstrated December 18 in front of the Westwood Federal Building here to demand the release of the 500 or more who had been arrested at the offices of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

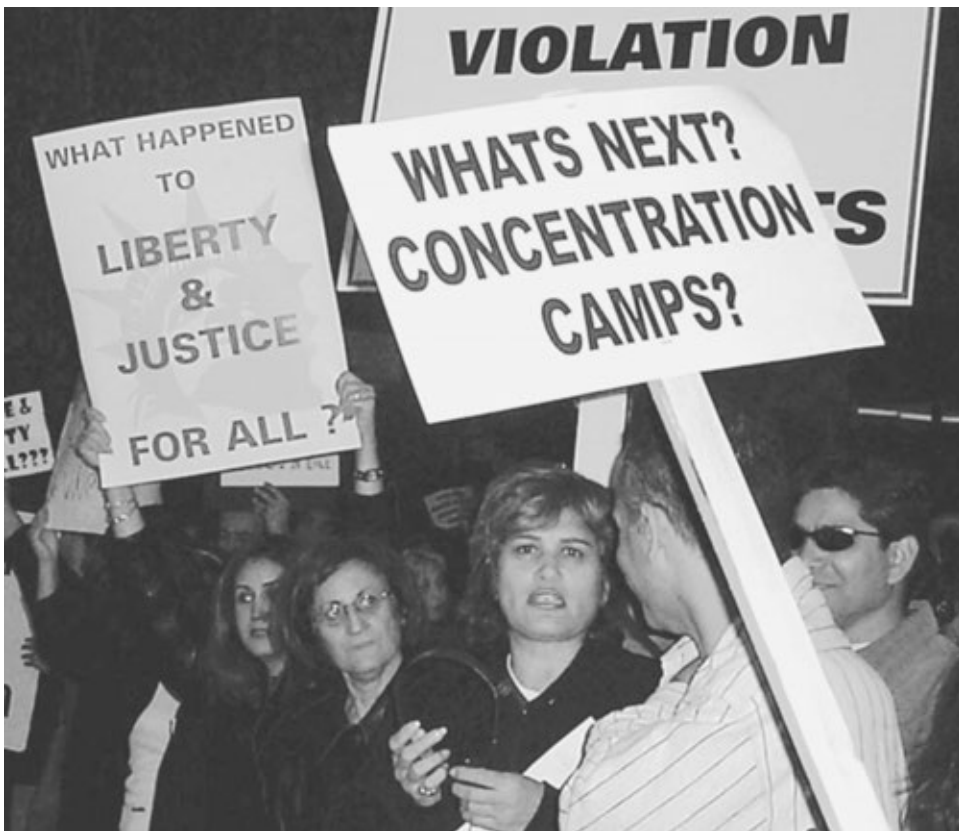
Thousands of people, including some who were applicants to become permanent residents, had showed up to comply with a new federal order requiring men from specified Middle Eastern and Asian countries holding temporary residency permits to register with the INS. Instead, many were handcuffed and herded into detention facilities, often without even beds to sleep on.

Demonstrators carried signs saying, “Unconstitutional Detention = Racism,” and “What’s Next? Concentration Camps?” referring to the incarceration of thousands of Japanese-Americans by the Roosevelt administration immediately following the declaration of war against Japan.

The emergency demonstration, publicized by word of mouth in the Iranian community here, had been called less than a day earlier. The Los Angeles metropolitan area has the largest Iranian population in the country.

The next day, in face of the protests, the INS began releasing some of those jailed.

Those who were locked up had complied with a federal order by Attorney General John Ashcroft. Males over the age of 16 born in Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, and Libya and who entered the United States by September 10 of this year were required to submit to being



Protesters at December 19 rally in Los Angeles condemn mass detentions at INS office

fingerprinted, photographed, and interrogated by federal agents or face deportation.

The order was directed at immigrants on temporary visas. Those arrested, however, include many with green card applications pending who assumed they were protected

under the law while they waited for the INS to finish processing their paperwork, even though in some cases their visas had expired.

“It’s like the roundup of Japanese during World War II,” said Adel Hajrasilidh, whose

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## U.S. is tripling troop deployment in Gulf

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

As U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell declares Iraq to be in “material breach” of United Nations resolutions—and thereby a target for a U.S. invasion—U.S. officials have let it be known that they are planning to move up to 100,000 ground troops into the Arab-Persian Gulf region at the beginning of 2003. The U.S. navy and air force presence will also be reinforced.

A deployment on that scale would almost triple the total number of U.S. fighting forces in the region. “We’re flowing forces now,” Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on the “Larry King Live” show, referring to the accelerating troop buildup.

Military equipment and vehicles are also being moved more rapidly into the region. The USNS *Watson* and USNS *Charlton*, each with a capacity of 62,000 tons, arrived in the Middle East in mid-December, while the USS *Pililaau* began loading in Beaumont, Texas. The *Yano* is scheduled to load equipment at Charleston, South Carolina. Laden down with materiel, these ships take about 30 days to reach the Gulf, say military officials.

The British ministry of defense has announced that it will deploy 20,000 troops to the region in the coming weeks. Royal Marines will be among the forces, reported the *Daily Telegraph*, “amid increasing signs of plans for an amphibious landing in southern Iraq.”

Ships are being chartered to ferry equipment, including tanks and other supplies. Meanwhile, the *Ark Royal* aircraft carrier will lead a six-ship task force to the Gulf in January.

The government has already alerted 6,500 reservists to be ready to be called into ac-

tion. “The key thing at the moment,” said Prime Minister Blair, “is to make all the preparations necessary, and to make sure that we are building up the capacity in the region, both the Americans and ourselves—and that we are able to undertake this mis-

sion if it falls to us to do so.”

Under the name of “psychological operations,” U.S. planes in southern Iraq have begun transmitting radio broadcasts “targeted at military commanders as well as ci-

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## New Year’s greetings to our brothers and sisters behind bars

The *Militant* extends warm New Year’s greetings to our brothers and sisters in prison.

The empty vows of “brotherhood” and “good will toward all” that the bosses and capitalist politicians dump on us at this time of year sound particularly hollow to workers and farmers behind bars—the 2 million

still in prison. That’s what America means: prison.”

We salute those who find themselves in jail because they have refused to stop fighting for justice. Their ranks will grow as working people resist the consequences of the wars, brutality, economic depression, racism, and women’s inequality bred by capitalism today.

Among them are five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and convicted in June 2001 of “conspiracy” charges. They are Gerardo Hernández, Tony Guerrero, René González, Ramón Labañino, and Fernando González. Their real “crime” was that of obtaining information on counterrevolutionary organizations that operate on U.S. territory and have a record of launching attacks on Cuba with Washington’s complicity.

Another militant jailed in recent months is Farouk Abdel-Muhti, an outspoken Palestinian rights fighter in New York. He was arrested in April, locked up in an immigrant jail in New Jersey, and now faces the imminent threat of being deported to Egypt or Israel, where his life would be in danger at the hands of the authorities. He has contin-

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## EDITORIAL

human beings who bear the brunt of the American “justice” system, with its everyday frame-ups and brutality.

Their seasonal talk of “peace” is even less credible as the billionaire rulers of this country prepare to launch a war of plunder against the peoples of the Mideast.

The *Militant* stands in a long tradition of labor solidarity with prisoners. On both sides of prison walls, working people share common oppressors and common interests. “Don’t be shocked when I say I was in prison,” said Malcolm X in 1963. “You’re

## UMWA faults gov’t report on Alabama mine deaths

BY ALICE KINCAID AND CLAY DENNISON

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) charged that the federal investigative report on the deaths of 13 miners in the explosions at the Jim Walter Resources No. 5 coal mine “identifies serious pre-existing problems at the mine but is ‘too limited in scope.’”

A December 13 statement released by the union concurred with the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration’s (MSHA) finding that the company’s “failed emergency plan, as well as JWR’s failure to properly examine the mine and failure to control explosive coal dust, were clear factors in the deaths of 13 miners.” UMWA president Cecil Roberts noted, however, that the report “does not represent a thorough examination of all the facts in the investigation.”

The explosions on September 23, 2001, were the worst U.S. coal mine disaster in nearly two decades. For more than a year

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## Róger Calero Defense Committee starts tour

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

The Róger Calero Defense Committee has launched a speaking tour for the *Militant* staff writer and *Perspectiva Mundial* associate editor in nine cities to broaden support for the fight to prevent his deportation by the immigration police.

The committee, which was initiated by the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), has also announced a drive to raise \$50,000 in funds for the defense campaign by the end of January. “These funds are needed to

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# U.S. to triple troop deployment in Gulf

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vilians,” reported the BBC on December 17. Side by side with this propaganda effort, U.S. and British aircraft carried out their seventh leaflet drop, warning Iraqi crews of fatal consequences if they repair “communications facilities” hit in air strikes December 14.  
“Not all American military analysts are convinced that psychological warfare will succeed,” noted the British news organization. The report cited an article by William Arkin, a former army intelligence officer and present newspaper columnist. If the U.S. invades Iraq, wrote Arkin in the *Baltimore Sun*, “bombs are going to do the talking.”

U.S. and British air attacks on the so-called “no-fly zones”—large swathes of territory in the north and south of Iraq—have become “almost a daily operation,” noted David Halton in a December 16 report on CBC TV. “It looks like a dress rehearsal for a full-scale bombing campaign, and it may well be exactly that.”  
Since March of this year, the tonnage of bombs dropped on Iraq has increased by 300 percent, reported the channel.

**Washington scorns Iraqi report**

In a December 19 news conference Secretary of State Colin Powell declared that the Iraqi government was in “material breach” of United Nations resolutions. Powell asserted that Baghdad’s December 7 report on its weapons programs “totally fails to address” the accusation that it builds and stores “weapons of mass destruction.” The Iraqi report denies the charge.  
“The burden remains on Iraq...to cooperate fully and for Iraq to prove...whether it does or does not have weapons of mass destruction,” said Powell. “We are convinced they do until they prove to us otherwise.” Hans Blix, who heads the UN crews that are carrying out weapons “inspections,” backed up the U.S. politician.

To date the intrusive searches of industrial, scientific, and government sites have turned up no proof of any such programs.  
“We expected [Iraqi president Saddam Hussein] to show that he would disarm, and as the secretary of state said, it is a long way from there,” said Bush on December 20.  
The U.S. president has said that he will cancel a mid-January trip to Africa in order to be on hand in Washington for decisions on Iraq. The UN Security Council is set to hear a report from Blix on January 27, and

Bush is scheduled to make his annual State of the Union address the next day.  
The *Washington Post* was one of many news organizations to note that the U.S. deployment of tens of thousands of additional troops to the Middle East and accelerated delivery of arms and equipment “would give President Bush the option of beginning combat operations in late January or early February.”

**Probes against Iran**

With Iraq squarely in their military sights today, the U.S. rulers are also mounting propaganda probes against Iran. “We are concerned about Iranian proliferation efforts that might lead to a nuclear weapon,” said Powell on December 18.

“I understand Iran has been caught constructing a secret underground site where it could produce fissile material,” said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher, offering no evidence for the assertion. A Fox News journalist claimed that “satellite images released last week show movement in two of Iran’s nuclear facilities.”

In a Voice of America radio broadcast on December 20, Bush urged the Iranian people to become “a full partner in the international community.” In his January 2002 State of the Union speech, Bush had targeted Iran, Iraq, and north Korea as members of “an axis of evil.”  
Washington’s hostility to Iran dates from the 1979 overthrow of the U.S.-installed and backed Shah—who, alongside Israel, was the most reliable ally of imperialism at the time—at the hands of a revolutionary movement of working people.

Union fighters in the oil industry and



**Above, soldiers from U.S. 3rd Infantry Division near Kuwait’s border during Operation Desert Spring military exercises. Right, British Royal Marines training aboard destroyer *Cardiff* in the Persian Gulf. Washington and London have announced plans for accelerated deployment of tens of thousands of troops in the New Year.**



other industrial workers played a decisive part in those events.

The self-confidence won in that struggle and victory is still a living force today and an impediment to Washington’s plans to roll back the revolution.  
Millions of people demonstrated throughout the country last February in answer to the threats behind the “axis of evil” charge made by Bush.

## Virginia ‘terror’ law used to press death penalty

**BY RÓGER CALERO**

The government of Virginia is seeking to prosecute John Allen Muhammad and John Lee Malvo under a newly passed “terrorism” law, the better to expedite their conviction and execution.  
They are charged with last October’s so-called “sniper” killings of 10 people, and also face prosecution in Maryland, Washington D.C., and Alabama. Laws in Virginia, like those in Alabama, allow the execution of the 17-year-old Malvo.

The new Virginia “terrorism” law went into effect in July after being approved with unanimous bipartisan support by the legislature in February. It authorizes the use of the death penalty for “acts of terrorism,” defined as actions with the “intent to intimidate the civilian population at large or influence the conduct or activities of the government of the United States, a state, or locality through intimidation.”  
The law has the advantage for the prosecution of not requiring proof of who fired the shots.  
Virginia prosecutors have expressed their confidence that the case will stand up to legal challenges centered on the new legislation. State attorney general Jerry Kilgore, who helped write the law, said, “The courts are going to look at intent.” In this terrorism era, you may be left with someone who did the planning and helped in a very horrible way.”  
Exploiting the public revulsion at the series of killings centered in the Washington, D.C. area, federal government officials have sought to use the “sniper” case to gain some momentum for the attacks on workers’ rights and civil liberties that have accelerated over the past year under the banner of the “war on terrorism.”  
In a letter dated October 24, Kilgore as-

sured U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft that “the Commonwealth of Virginia has tested and proven criminal statutes under which these murderers can be tried and sentenced to death.” The state of Virginia has the second highest execution rate in the country after Texas. Since 1976, the year the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated capital punishment, the state courts have executed 86 people.  
Ashcroft said in November that he had sent the case to Virginia’s courts first because their laws would make it easier to win a death penalty conviction.  
Even some advocates of the death penalty have warned that the use of the antiterrorism law would set a dangerous precedent, opening the way to more applications for capital punishment in the name of “fighting terror.”  
“There is a possibility that the terrorism law might open the door to all sorts of capital prosecutions we did not intend,” said Democrat James F. Almand, a death penalty supporter and member of the Virginia House of Delegates that passed the law.  
“Obviously what the legislature had in mind was bin Laden giving the order to other people,” said Ronald J. Bacigal, a professor at the University of Richmond School of Law. “Just about any kind of violent crime that intimidates a community you can talk about as a form of terrorism,” he said.

THE **MILITANT**

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# Palestinian rights backer at Florida campus fights firing

BY KARL BUTTS

TAMPA, Florida—"I'm determined now, more than ever, to continue this fight until I regain back all my rights under the contract and the constitution and that justice is served," Dr. Sami Al-Arian said in a press statement. He spoke following a December 16 federal court ruling dismissing a lawsuit designed to expedite the firing of the University of South Florida (USF) professor for his political beliefs and activity. Al-Arian is an outspoken supporter of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

Judge Susan Bucklew tossed out a suit filed by the University of South Florida asking the court to rule on whether its plan to fire Al-Arian would violate his constitutional rights. University authorities say they intend to fire the tenured professor on the basis of alleged ties to "terrorists."

The fight to defend Al-Arian, who is of Palestinian origin, has attracted national attention as a symbol of opposition to the attacks on political rights promoted by the U.S. government under the guise of "homeland security."

Al-Arian's attorney, Robert McKee, said the decision fortified the defense position "that the university was trying to deprive Dr. Al-Arian of his rights under [the faculty union's] contract." USF president Judy Genshaft wanted the federal court to back her effort to fire Al-Arian because he has threatened a lawsuit and the American Association of University Professors has threatened to censure the school for violating academic freedom if she does so.

Association General Secretary Mary Burgan concurred with the judge's decision that USF cannot circumvent the process that secures the rights of Al-Arian and all faculty.

This is the latest skirmish in the year-long effort to fire the professor. Genshaft first moved against Al-Arian after he appeared on the Fox News program "The O'Reilly Factor," on September 26 of last year. Taking Al-Arian by surprise, host William O'Reilly accused him of making USF a "hotbed for Islamic militants," warning, "If I was the CIA, I'd follow you wherever you went. I'm saying I'd be your shadow, doctor." The program set off a flurry of hostile e-mails and phone calls including death threats against him, according to USF officials.

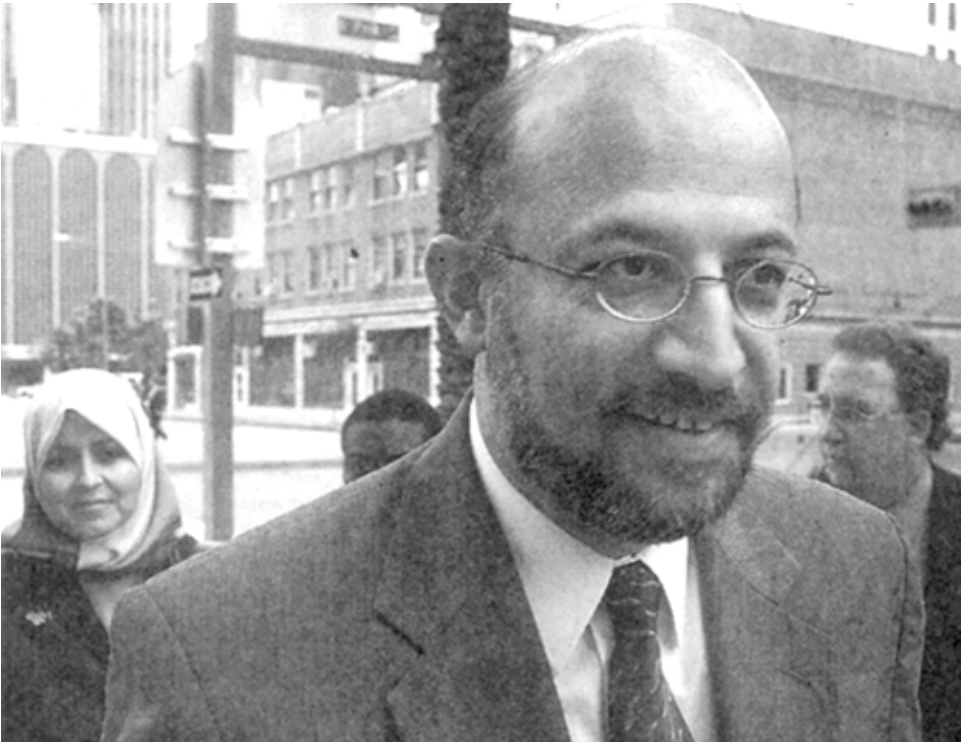
The day after the TV program, Genshaft suspended Al-Arian, then sent him a "final warning" October 8 barring him from setting foot on campus. With the campus emptied for Christmas break, the USF board of trustees held an "emergency meeting" December 19 at which it recommended in a 12-1 vote that Al-Arian be fired. Within hours, the university provost issued a "Notice of Intent to Terminate."

At the time, university officials justified this action claiming Al-Arian violated his employment contract by failing to clarify that remarks he had made in off-campus speeches were his personal views and not those of the university.

Following an outpouring of support from the USF Faculty Senate; the faculty union, United Faculty of Florida; and student organizations, Al-Arian held a press conference January 14 announcing his campaign to fight the university authorities' drive to fire him. Representatives of a range of organizations supporting his fight turned out including from the three largest U.S. Muslim organizations: the American Muslim Alliance, the American Muslim Council, and the Muslim Political Affairs Council.

Ratcheting up the stakes, the school filed suit in August. They alleged that Al-Arian had ties to "terrorists" and that such allegations gave them the right to fire the 17-year, tenured professor without violating his free speech rights. No evidence has been offered to substantiate these claims nor has Al-Arian ever been charged with any illegal action.

The federal government has conducted years of on and off "investigations" into Al-Arian's activities. Government officials demonstratively backed USF's campaign



Dr. Sami Al-Arian, professor at the University of Southern Florida, is fighting university officials' efforts to fire him because of his outspoken support of Palestinian struggle.

against him when in February the U.S. Attorney's Tampa office publicly announced that he was the subject of an ongoing federal investigation.

Despite suffering a setback, USF shows no signs of backing off. Dick Beard, chair-

man of the USF board of trustees, who has publicly stated many times he wants Al-Arian fired, called the decision "no big deal." "It just would have made things simpler for the university," he said, in deciding the administration's next move.

## Home foreclosure rate hits 30-year high

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The American dream of owning a home—as portrayed in the capitalist media—is becoming a nightmare for growing numbers of working people and middle-class professionals, as hard times squeeze their wallets and their ability to keep up with sky-high mortgage payments. Many are having their homes repossessed, while an increasing number of families are trying to hold on to their homes by seeking the "protection" of federal bankruptcy laws.

An estimated two-thirds of families in the United States are reported to own their homes—the most ever. In reality, however, many so-called "owners" are locked into a lifetime of mortgage payments, having been enticed by attractive interest rates into buying relatively expensive houses. A significant number have taken out second and even third mortgages on their homes.

According to the Mortgage Bankers Association of America, banks and other creditors began foreclosing on 134,885 mortgaged homes in the second quarter of this year. At about four in every 1,000, that's the highest rate in the 30 years during which the association has compiled such records.

By the end of June the backlogs held by these institutions of homes awaiting foreclosure had risen to a record 414,772.

Alongside these foreclosures and accompanying evictions, record numbers of people are applying to place their homes under Chapter 13 of the federal bankruptcy code. By the middle of this year more than 220,000 people had taken this step, an 8 percent rise over the previous year and the highest level ever.

Chapter 13 bankruptcy, also known as

"individual debt adjustment" or "repayment plan," generally involves people who have fallen behind in their mortgage payments but retain a source of income. Under its provisions individuals are able to stave off creditors from repossessing their homes, and get limited-term relief from wage garnishments, liens, and other methods used to collect debts. The payment plan lasts from two-and-a-half to five years.

The Chapter 13 filings fit into the soaring number of personal bankruptcies, which reached an all-time high of 1.55 million people over the past year. Bloomberg.com reported in November that personal debt in the United States has reached a staggering \$8 trillion, including credit card debts and mortgages. "Repayments are coming due amid a slow recovery from recession that is contributing to joblessness and pushing stock prices toward a third straight losing year," the online news service noted.

### Higher portion of income on housing

As house prices and rents continue to rise, working people are forking out greater chunks of their income on housing. According to a report from Harvard University, house prices have been leaping ahead of incomes in most large U.S. cities. Since 1997 prices have increased by more than 30 percent in eight of the largest metropolitan areas.

In the New York boroughs of Bronx and Brooklyn the prices of single-family homes rose by around 57 and 61 percent on average during the 1990s. Residents spend at least 35 percent of their paychecks on housing, placing these areas at the top of the country in spending on shelter—leapfrogging over Hudson County, New Jersey, Miami-Dade, Florida, and a dozen counties along the coast of California that were at the top in 1990.

The 2000 census for New York City reported that in four of New York's five boroughs housing costs rose while median household income declined, with Manhattan being the sole exception. Resident Mary Sauri, who retired early from the Verizon company and was recently laid off from a telemarketing firm, told reporters that she pays more than 60 percent of her income for the \$180,000 brick-row house she purchased in Brooklyn.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines "affordable housing" as a home that costs less than 30 percent of a family's income in either rent or monthly mortgage payments.

In recent years lenders and home builders in the housing industry have eased their criteria for granting housing loans. Before, they limited loans to a level that allowed buyers to spend no more than 28 percent of their income on mortgage payments—thus in their eyes reducing the risk of delinquency and default. Now the rules have been relaxed

to permit smaller downpayments and allow home buyers to allocate more of their income toward mortgage payments.

As capitalists in the housing sector, from banks to real estate companies to construction firms, lined their own pockets by encouraging customers to go deeply into debt, many people got trapped into purchasing houses they could not afford, lured by adjustable rate mortgages with low "teaser" rates that quickly climb, the *Wall Street Journal* reported. Loans were based on the value of houses, and not necessarily on residents' ability to pay.

Companies like home builder Dominion Homes rake in monthly checks from residents who have then had to abandon their homes once they found they couldn't keep up with rising interest rates and higher than expected property taxes.

One of Dominion's customers, help-desk employee Rob Jones and his wife, a merchandise handler for Sears, lost their home in Columbus, Ohio, last year. They declared bankruptcy after being unable to keep up monthly house payments that increased from \$650 to \$1,100 as the interest rate on their loan climbed upward. "I feel now that I wasn't told everything upfront," said Jones.

Almost half the 15 homes on the Jones's block in the South Village development of Dominion Homes are empty or for sale. Dominion Homes defends its business dealings, declaring that it was administering a government program of the Federal Housing Authority.

## Joblessness hits Black workers the hardest

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

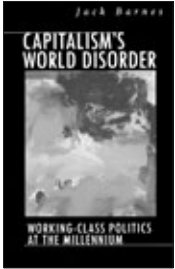
Labor Department statistics confirm that working people who are Black are suffering the heaviest blows from rising joblessness in the United States.

Reporting the figures in a December 9 article entitled, "Job hunt gets harder for African-Americans," *USA Today* notes what many among the Black population know only too well for years: "African-Americans tend to be the last to be hired" in an upturn and "the first to lose their jobs" when the economy turns sour.

The government agency announced last week that the overall unemployment rate increased from 5.7 to 6.0 percent in November, matching the April total, the highest in eight years. Among Blacks the figure jumped from 9.8 to 11 percent—almost twice the overall rate. The figure for Black men rose almost 1.5 percent to 12 percent, the highest since 1994.

The jobless rate for Latinos remained unchanged at 7.8 percent in November, also considerably higher than the national average.

### From Pathfinder



#### Capitalism's World Disorder *Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*

Jack Barnes

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# Mexico farmers resist U.S. trade assault

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

GUADALAJARA, Mexico—As the 10th anniversary of the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) approaches, some 2,000 peasants from 24 of Mexico's 31 states have been protesting in Mexico City, the country's capital. One of the main slogans of the protesters is "El campo no aguanta más!" (The countryside can't bear it any more!)

A series of protests began December 2 against the implementation of provisions of the NAFTA agreement that will have further devastating consequences for peasants and other agricultural producers in this country.

NAFTA went into effect in 1994. While its signatories touted the agreement as a boon to the economies of Canada, Mexico, and the United States, the results of this imperialist trade pact are making it increasingly difficult for Mexican peasants to survive on the land.

Eighty-eight busloads of peasants arrived in Mexico City December 2 accompanied by 20 cows. The peasants are demanding more financial aid from the federal government and a moratorium on implementation of the section of NAFTA regarding agricultural production and trade. As part of these protests, dozens of small farmers demonstrated inside the Mexican parliament and were attacked by police.

The next stage of the NAFTA provisions to go into effect January 1 requires that Mexico remove tariffs on an additional 20 food imports including wheat, rice, potatoes, and coffee. Powdered milk, corn, and beans are scheduled to be added to this list in 2008.

The protesters were members of the National Union of Autonomous Regional Organizations of Peasants (UNORCA), which includes 30 organizations of cattle ranchers, coffee farmers, and beekeepers. Other organizations protesting NAFTA were the National Union of Agricultural Workers (UNTA), and the National Confederation of Peasants (CNC).

A quarter of Mexico's 100 million people live in the countryside. While the National Agricultural Council, a boss organization, reported that 700,000 jobs could be lost in rural areas after the new NAFTA provisions are implemented in January, the CNC estimates that 600,000 jobs have already been lost since the implementation of NAFTA in 1994.

The peasant organizations represented at the Mexico City protests presented a Na-



Members of National Union of Autonomous Regional Organizations of Peasants march December 2 in Mexico City to demand government relief and a moratorium on NAFTA provisions that will lift trade protection for Mexican farmers in face of U.S. competition.

tional Program for the Economic Development with six demands designed to protect Mexican farmers from the competition of their imperialist neighbors to the north, who can produce goods more cheaply than the small producers in Mexico. The demands include a moratorium on implementing the agrarian clauses of NAFTA, emergency programs to provide government subsidies to Mexican farmers from 2003 to 2020, assigning 1.5 percent of Mexico's Gross National Product for the productive development of the land and 1.5 percent more for the social and environmental development of the rural sector, and recognition of the rights and culture of Mexico's indigenous population.

#### 'Lost our food sovereignty'

"We've lost our food sovereignty," said Alberto Gómez Flores, the president of UNORCA, pointing to the jump in U.S. food imports between 1997 and 2001, whose value doubled from \$1.6 billion to \$3.2 billion.

A decade ago, Mexico was largely self-sufficient in food, producing 80 percent of its basic food needs. Today the figure has dropped to 68 percent. About 65 percent of

the meat is imported.

Gómez explained that "the members of this organization are not used to mobilizing in Mexico City, but their presence here shows the uncertainty and the desperation that exist in their land, towns, and communities."

Valentín Citlauhua from Veracruz said, "I came to support the my brothers.... What they are saying is, 'we don't have money to eat.'"

The Mexican government has offered only limited protection, including a raise of 19 billion pesos in farm subsidies for a total of 53 billion pesos for the year 2003. (\$1=10 pesos.)

While Mexico is importing more U.S. goods at cheaper prices, what a worker or farmer has to pay for them is increasing. In the early 1990s, a worker earning minimum wage could buy 15.9 kilos of tortillas, 9 liters of milk, and 3.8 kilos of beans. Today the same wage can only purchase about half that amount of food.

Juan Manuel Maya told the *Los Angeles Times* that he had to give up the hog farm he had been working for 20 years because he couldn't compete with U.S. farm products. Over the past 20 years, U.S. pork im-

ports to Mexico have taken over 40% of the market share, up from just 5 percent before NAFTA. Grain to feed hogs is 20 percent higher in Mexico than in the United States. Enrique Domínguez, director of the Mexican Hog Farmers Association said that 85 percent of the remaining members of his organization are losing money.

The situation for farm workers is also worsening. Of the 3.2 million farm laborers in Mexico, some 1.2 million are migrant workers. About half of their children are not vaccinated, 60 percent do not go to school, and most farm worker families have no access to medical services.

A document by the Commission for Rural Development states that 71 percent of the national population suffers from malnourishment

The crisis in the countryside is part of the economic crisis facing Mexico as a whole. That crisis is compounded by the fact that 12.3 percent of the country's national budget goes to pay the interest on its foreign debt to imperialist creditors.

Many factories that make parts for U.S. companies have left Mexico for China over the past two years because of lower wages there. These factories, commonly called maquiladoras, were lost 287,000 jobs since their peak in October 2000. The electronics industry alone saw a drop in employment of 8.8 percent last year.

The third-largest source of income in the country, after oil and manufacturing exports, is remittances sent home by family members living in the United States. Some 22 million Mexicans live there today.

For their part, the governments of the United States, Canada and Mexico all argue that NAFTA has been beneficial for the population and for their economies. Mexico's secretary of the economy boasted recently that thanks to NAFTA \$120 billion was invested in the country.

U.S. government officials are quick to deflect the blame for the rural crisis in Mexico away from NAFTA. A U.S. official said Mexican agriculture faces "structural challenges that existed before NAFTA," citing the high cost of credit and production, and the lack of markets, transportation and refrigeration that U.S. agribusiness does not face.

But the reality of capitalism reveals that the face of Mexican agriculture is undergoing rapid changes—changes that are not caused by NAFTA but are accelerated by its implementation. More than a million peasants have left the land over the past decade and the hold of capitalist agricultural enterprises continues to increase throughout the country. But the capitalists are running into resistance to their course, as the Mexico City protests of peasants show.

In the southern state of Chiapas, where the indigenous population exploded in rebellion a decade ago, peasant organizations are vowing to take over and close the 48 border entries and ports if the government implements further provisions of NAFTA in January.

Alfonso Elías Cardona, of the Commission for Rural Development, said 80 percent of food producers in Mexico are close to bankruptcy. "We can anticipate," he said, "that the Mexican countryside is brewing many social conflicts."

Rollande Girard is a sewing machine operator in the San Francisco Bay Area and was a participant in the 16th Guadalajara International Book Fair.

## Miami protesters: Free Haitian immigrants!

BY MARY ANN SCHMIDT

MIAMI—Several demonstrations have taken place here to demand freedom for the more than 200 Haitian immigrants who have been locked up at the federal immigration jail in Miami for almost two months now. They are protesting the denial of due process for the Haitians, as immigration courts have moved to expedite their deportation, in some cases violating their right to legal representation and other constitutional guarantees.

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) cops arrested the 200 people on October 29 when they reached the shores of Miami, and have imprisoned them at Krome Detention Center. Protests led by Haitian rights organizations erupted immediately, and support for the fight to release the Haitians has continued to broaden.

"You've got to take a stand," said Hendrick Durand, explaining why he was at a November 21 protest. He said it was his first demonstration.

Those taking part in the actions represented a broad array of unions, community organizations, and immigrant rights groups, as well as students and professors from the University of Miami, Florida International University, and Miami High School. One contingent was a dozen garment workers on strike at the Point Blank plant near Miami, where they are trying to bring in the Union of Needletrade, Industrial and Textile Employees.

"We are with you 100 percent," declared Raúl Silva from Alianza Martiana, a predominantly Cuban-American organization that opposes the U.S. embargo against Cuba,



Militant/Eric Simpson

Haitians and their supporters demonstrate November 21 in Miami to demand release of Haitian refugees.

at the November 21 action.

One of the main slogans of the demonstration was "Equal treatment for Haitians," referring to the difference in the federal government's treatment between Cubans and Haitians arriving to this country. Haitians are almost always put in an INS jail. Under the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, Cubans who set foot on U.S. soil without going through legal channels can apply for legal residence a year and one day later.

Marleine Bastien, executive director of Haitian Women in Miami, was one of the

speakers. Her organization and others argue that the rights afforded to the Cuban immigrants should be extended to Haitians and other immigrants.

Other speakers at the protest included Democratic politician Alfred Sharpton and Abner Louima, a Haitian immigrant who was tortured by police in New York in 1997, setting off widespread protests that led to the prosecution of several cops.

On December 7 a demonstration of 300 people in front of the INS offices in Miami brought together the struggles of the Immokalee Farm Workers, Liberty City public housing residents, and the Haitian immigrants.

On December 16 dozens of people fasted to protest the fact that 17 unaccompanied Haitian children are among those locked up in the INS jail. That same day an immigration judge denied political asylum to the first five detainees who received a hearing.

Cheryl Little, executive director of Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center told the *Miami Herald*, "They're not even pretending to give them due process." She and others explained that detainees are being railroaded on a

fast track to deportation.

One lawyer reported being able to meet for 20 minutes with her client before the hearing, while others had no lawyer at all.

In 2001 the Bush administration adopted a policy of indefinite detention for Haitian immigrants reaching U.S. shores until their cases are resolved by deporting them or—less probably—granting them asylum.

In response to the uproar against the unequal treatment of Haitians, the government changed its indefinite detention policy in November to include all non-Cubans.

### FROM PATHFINDER

#### In *New International* no. 10

##### • Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War

by Jack Barnes

##### • What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold

##### • Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution

by Mary-Alice Waters

##### • The Curve of Capitalist Development

by Leon Trotsky \$14.00

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 14.





# European Union expands, as frictions among powers grow

BY SAM MANUEL

The European Union added 10 new member countries at its meeting in Copenhagen December 13. It also rebuffed Turkey's efforts, backed by London and Washington, to be given a date to begin talks on its entry to the EU.

Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, the former Soviet republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, the former Yugoslav republic of Slovenia, Cyprus, and Malta are all scheduled to formally become members in May 2004.

The expansion brings the EU to 25 countries. With a combined gross domestic product of more than \$9 trillion, rivaling that of the United States, the union has been touted as a potential competitor to the North American colossus. In reality it is dominated by the largest imperialist powers, particularly Germany and France, and is marked by deep divisions and frequent tensions.

The fractious character of the bloc burst through even while being hailed as proof of progress toward a united Europe. For months leading up to the meeting Paris and Berlin —themselves frequently at odds — on one side and London on the other had been fighting it out over how to finance the expansion.

At the center of the dispute were the deep differences over "reform" of EU farm policy, that is, the extent and character of the government subsidies that give agricultural products from France and elsewhere a competitive edge at home and abroad. The subsidies primarily benefit large capitalist farmers.

This debate has been at the center of the rivalries among the imperialist powers within the EU, with each one jockeying to strengthen its position at the expense of its rival.

The fight over this issue led to a sharp exchange between British prime minister Anthony Blair and French president Jacques Chirac in late October following an EU meeting in Brussels.

Blair was livid that Chirac and German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder had "pre-cooked" a deal that would maintain substantial farm subsidies that Britain wants to substantially reduce. An editorial in London's *Financial Times* described the Franco-German deal as "sordid" and "squalidly arrived at." It added that France—the world's biggest agricultural exporter after the United States—would be the principal beneficiary of the deal. Chirac responded by postponing a traditional year-end meeting with Blair.

The compromise set the framework for the amount of funding the new members of the EU would receive. The largest of them, Poland, led an effort to hold out on joining until they received increased financing to upgrade their infrastructures. Under the agreement the new member countries would receive an additional \$430 million in farm and other subsidies. The total package would amount to \$42 billion between 2004 and 2006.

That is only 25 percent of the amount these countries would receive under the rules for current members. It would rise to 40 percent of that level by 2007, and then increase in 10 percent annual increments until attaining parity in 2013.

## Turkey rebuffed

The meeting also rejected the Turkish government's long-standing application for EU membership. Ankara has tried to become a part of Europe since 1959 when it applied to join the European Economic Community, the forerunner of the EU. Its population of 67 million, mostly Muslims, roughly equals the combined total of the 10 countries admitted from eastern Europe.

Turkish prime minister Abdullah Gul accused the EU leaders of "discrimination" and "prejudice." Former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing—the head of the commission to draft a constitution for the EU—earlier said that Turkey was "not a European country" and that inviting it in would mean "the end of Europe."

The U.S. administration lobbied EU officials hard for Turkey's admission. Presi-

dent George Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell both made phone calls to EU officials on Turkey's behalf.

French Industry Minister and former president of the European Parliament, Nicole Fontaine, accused the Bush administration of "interfering" in European business. She was followed by another French official, Pascal Lamy, who is also the EU trade commissioner. Fontaine said, "It's certainly not up to the president of the United States to interfere in something...which mainly concerns Europeans."

## Imperialist war against Iraq

In part, U.S. support for Turkey's application comes out of Washington's push to strengthen the two countries' military ties and to take advantage of Turkey's proximity to Iraq. The Pentagon is seeking permission from the Turkish government to move tens of thousands of U.S. troops through its territory in any military attack. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the leader of the ruling Justice and Development Party, recently visited with President Bush to discuss cooperation in the war in preparation.

The Turkish regime has interests of its own to defend in Iraq and is also making plans to send its own soldiers into the north of the country to prevent a revolt by Iraqi Kurds.

The daily *Hurriyet* newspaper reported December 17 that Turkey is planning to deploy 65,000 to 70,000 troops in northern Iraq if there is a massive U.S. assault. According to a December 17 *New York Times* report, Turkish officials are concerned that Iraqi Kurds could seize the northern cities of Mosul and Kirkuk, a major oil production area.

Turkey is also a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and has used its control of NATO assets to block EU efforts to develop a European force that could function independently of the US-led and dominated NATO.

Turkey's army is bigger than that of any EU member, while its military budget is exceeded only in Britain, France, Germany, and Italy.

Following the EU meeting the December 16 *Financial Times* announced that agreements had been reached with Turkey to allow the EU access to NATO assets. It also reported that the EU plans to deploy its first military mission, in Macedonia, early next year.

## Social crisis

Every step at extending the EU brings the conflicting interests of the ruling classes within it into sharper relief, on issues that include farm trade, military matters, and monetary policies. To date Britain has declined to participate in the EU's most ambitious project—the adoption of the euro as a common currency.

A full page analysis article in the December 4 *Financial Times* opened by stating, "As some of its member states flirt with recession, the European Union's ambitions to become the world's most competitive economy by 2010 are looking increasingly hollow. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the quest to create an EU-wide single financial market to compete with the U.S." The article is replete with examples of how this plan has run head-on into the competing interests of the capitalist rulers of each European country.

Pedro Sobles, EU Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, hinted at the rivalries when he noted, "National governments, market operators, regulators, supervisors, all have an incentive to promote their own model." Theresa Villiers, a British Conservative Member of Parliament, put it more bluntly, stating, "There is a lack of political will and entrenched protectionism in some member states."

The deepening capitalist crisis is also putting strains on the EU. In September anger erupted among the smaller members when it was revealed that Germany, France, and Italy would be given two extra years to bring their budget deficits down into line with EU requirements. They argued that this

## Workers at Fiat in Italy protest job cuts



**Thousands of workers at Fiat auto plant in Turin march outside the factory December 6, as workers blocked roads in other cities across Italy. The unionists were protesting plans to cut more than 8,000 jobs at Italy's largest private employer. Fiat, which declared \$2 billion in losses this year, carried out the first wave of 5,600 layoffs in mid-December. The bosses said the layoffs are only "temporary" and that most workers will be called back within a year; the unions disputed that claim. The government said it would provide subsidies for 2,400 permanently laid-off workers. The unionists rejected the proposal and called for more protests, expressing anger at the government's decision not to block the job cuts. Workers blocked roads in Sicily and Milan, and shut down a plant in Turin.**

showed there was one rule for the big countries and another for the rest, and explained that it would undermine the budgetary rules of the "stability and growth" pact underpinning the euro.

The French government outright defied a directive from the European Commission to cut its deficit next year by 0.5 percent. French finance minister Francis Mer stated, "For 2003 we decided there were other priorities for France—for example, increases in military spending."

A few months ago the Italian government revised its projected growth downward from 3 percent annually to 2 percent. But this month it issued a new projection of 0.6 percent. Confindustria, the main bosses' organization, projected the more conservative figure of 0.4 percent.

# Students in Boston rally against cuts in Black studies

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON— More than 100 students, faculty, and staff staged a rally December 5 to protest proposed cuts in Black studies at the University of Massachusetts in Boston (UMB). The cuts also came under fire at a public meeting on the campus later that afternoon, and at a union-organized event the day before.

A snow storm did not deter the students and others who gathered outside the Phillis Wheatley Building for the noontime protest. Named after a slave who became the first Black poet published in the United States, the location was symbolically appropriate for a protest that defended courses on the role and contributions of Black men and women in U.S. history.

Students held signs that read, "Ignorance Kills—Black History Now," "Keep it Real—Keep Black Studies," and "Black History is American History."

The cuts are part of a broader attack on state funding for social programs put forward by Massachusetts governor Jane Swift with the full backing of her successor, Governor-elect Mitt Romney. With the threatened decline in the state education budget, austerity measures proposed by school administrators include the elimination of a tenured full-time position in the Africana Studies Department. The move will end introductory Black studies classes and simultaneously remove the option for students to major in Black History.

Aminah Pilgrim, a Cape Verde-born professor whose position in the Africana Studies Department will be eliminated by the cuts, explained at the rally, "I'm not here for myself. I am here for those who are not here. For those who have died to make our history. Their story needs to be told."

The government is basing next year's budget on a projected growth rate of 2.3 percent. Confindustria expects it to come in at under 2 percent. The European Union put the Italian growth at 1.8 percent and expects Italy to have a budget deficit of 2.2 percent of gross domestic product.

The main rules of the pact require that countries run a balanced budget and not exceed a deficit of 3 percent of gross domestic product. It is expected that Germany will overshoot the 3 percent deficit this year.

The EU's three biggest economies, together making up three-fourths of the newly merged economy, have no room to borrow, cut taxes or increase spending. And because they no longer have a central bank, they cannot devalue their currencies or cut interest rates.

Later that day around 100 students and staff attended a campus-wide meeting to discuss the budget cuts and to defend the "Urban Mission"—a school statement of principle that says the university should support "diversity" and "nontraditional students." Among the participants were top school officials who had agreed to attend and hear the grievances. The UMB Budget Cuts Coalition sponsored the gathering, along with the Africana Studies Department, Black Student Center, Women's Center, and Queer Student Union.

Professor Robert Johnson, chair of the Africana Studies Department, said that a school administrator had told him the position in the Africana Studies Department would be funded for one more year. "This is a victory," Johnson said, "but we have to keep on fighting." Other speakers expressed opposition to raises in student fees, tuition costs, and parking fees.

The day before the various unions representing teaching staff and workers on the campus held an "all-union" meeting to discuss "the contract crisis" and other questions. Last fall Governor Swift stepped in to veto funding for raises that had been negotiated in contracts with the unions in the Massachusetts university, citing the state's "budget crisis."

University of Massachusetts president William Bulger's refusal to condemn the governor's action has promoted several "no confidence" votes at union meetings. Elizabeth Mock, president of the Faculty/Staff union, described such votes as an "important public expression."

*Ted Leonard is a meatpacking worker in the Boston area. Maggie Trowe contributed to this article.*



# Youth from the Americas hold congress in Mexico

BY PAUL PEDERSON

GUADALAJARA, Mexico—More than 1,000 youth from 26 countries attended the 13th congress of the Continental Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Students (OCLAE), held here from November 29 to December 2. Their discussions and debates focused on how to resist the social and economic devastation imperialism is creating in Latin America and the Caribbean today.

OCLAE is made up of student federations from countries across the Americas. It was founded in 1963 at the fourth continental student congress, held in Havana, Cuba. Taking place four years after the triumph over the Batista dictatorship, it registered the impact of the Cuban Revolution throughout the continent.

This year's conference was hosted by Mexico's Federation of University Students (FEU), which had a delegation of 280 at the conference. The Cuban delegation, led by the Federation of University Students (FEU) of that country, brought 162 youth. It included students from 25 countries who are studying at the Latin American School of Medicine or the International School of Physical Education and Sports.

There were also sizable delegations from Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Brazil, Colombia, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela.

More than 50 youth from the United States and seven from Canada attended the congress. Although organizations from these two countries are not members, OCLAE president Yanelis Martínez made a point of welcoming their participation at the opening of the congress. At the closing session, Martínez read a statement declaring as "friends of OCLAE" the Canadian Federation of University Students and the participating youth organizations from the United States.

Those present from the United States included members of Latino student groups from Temple University and Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, the Chicano student group MEChA, Comité Zapatista de Los Angeles, Puerto Rican Alliance of Los Angeles, United States Student Association, Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, and Young Socialists.

Attending from Canada were members of a Palestinian rights group in Vancouver, the Young Socialists, the Montreal-based antiglobalization group Alternative, and a representative of the Canadian Federation of University Students from Quebec.

Similarly, the delegates from Latin America reflected a spectrum of political



Militant/Chessie Molano

**Delegates at congress of Latin American student organization OCLAE in Guadalajara, Mexico.**

currents. These ranged from various Communist Parties and social-democratic organizations to the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in Mexico, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador, and the Maoist Bandera Roja of Venezuela.

## Discussion on U.S. military presence

The conference program included eight workshops, which took up topics such as student and youth movements, culture, education, technology, and defense of the environment. Reports from the workshops were presented at the close of the conference.

Two major conference sessions were held. One was a panel on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a trade bloc

promoted by Washington. The U.S. rulers seek to use the FTAA to plunder more freely Latin America's natural resources and labor and reinforce the unequal trade relations between imperialist and semicolonial nations. Washington is also seeking to use it to strengthen its edge over its European imperialist rivals.

The second major session was a panel on "The U.S. Military Presence in Latin America and the Caribbean." The presentations reflected some of the differing political views expressed throughout the OCLAE conference. The speakers included Iraklis Tsavdaridis, president of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY); Miguel Ramírez, a leader of the Federation of Pro-Independence University Students in Puerto Rico (FUPI); Olympia Newton, member of the National Coordinating Committee of the Young Socialists in the United States; and Claudia Flores, member of the Colombian Association of University Students. The featured speaker was Daniel Ortega, former president of Nicaragua and leader of the Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN), one of the main parties in Nicaragua.

Flores opened the panel by reading a statement from her organization condemning the repression in Colombia carried out by the U.S.-backed government of Alvaro Uribe, including the militarization of the universities and victimization of student leaders. She appealed for support to the struggle against repression in Colombia.

"Two thirds of the territory of the island of Vieques is a U.S. military base," explained FUPI leader Rivera, speaking about the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, which the U.S. Navy uses as a bombing range. "More than 1,500 Puerto Ricans have been jailed for their protest activities against the Navy in Vieques." Pointing to Puerto Rico's status as a U.S. colony, he noted the strategic importance U.S. imperialism attaches to its military presence there. The Roosevelt Roads base, in eastern Puerto Rico, is the largest U.S. naval base in the world.

The following day, at the closing session, the OCLAE leadership called for internationally coordinated demonstrations against the U.S. Navy's presence in Vieques for April 15, two weeks before the date Washington is supposed to cease bombing exercises on the island.

Tsavdaridis described the world as one dominated by Washington's increasing weight. As the world's only superpower, he said, "U.S. imperialism is becoming more and more aggressive, and it now dominates everything, including the United Nations."

The WFDY president, who is also a leader of the Communist Youth of Greece, said that with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the justification for NATO no longer exists, yet the U.S. government continues to press for its expansion. What's more, he said, "NATO no longer acts within its own borders." He argued that despite the mild protests of the powers making up the European Union, Washington flaunts the will of its allies in Europe and around the world. He pointed to the recent large pacifist-led demonstrations in London; Florence, Italy; and Washington, D.C., as a road to preventing the U.S. government from going to war against Iraq.

Newton explained that the growing U.S. military presence in Latin America and Washington's moves toward war in the Middle East flow from imperialism's weakness, not its strength. The U.S. rulers have no way out of the deep economic crisis grip-

**Continued on Page 15**

## Young Socialists leader speaks on fight against U.S. imperialist intervention in Latin America

**The following are remarks given on December 1 at the panel on "The U.S. Military Presence in Latin America and the Caribbean," at the congress of the Continental Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Students (OCLAE) in Guadalajara, Mexico. Olympia Newton is a member of the Young Socialists National Coordinating Committee and was the Socialist Workers candidate for California secretary of state in the November elections.**

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

The expanding presence of the U.S. military in the Americas and throughout the world is a sign not of the strength of U.S. imperialism, but of its weakness. Less and less able to impose their will on the peoples of the world through economic and political clout, the U.S. rulers increasingly must rely on Washington's military might to brutalize and try to intimidate working people the world over in order to defend and extend their power and profits.

World capitalism has entered the beginnings of a deep economic depression. In the United States major corporations such as United Airlines and Ford Motor company are effectively bankrupt. Unemployment is rising, and industrial production is contracting. The U.S. rulers have no way out of this crisis, and the consequences are driving them toward deeper political, economic, and military penetration of the semicolonial world. They must conquer new markets to try to prop up their dying system, and they must try to crush the resistance that imperialism generates around the world. They need to increase even more their share of the world's natural resources against their imperialist rivals in France, Germany, Japan, and other imperialist countries.

Plan Colombia, which involves the deeper penetration of U.S. military forces in Latin America, is aimed not only at greater U.S. domination of import and export markets throughout the region, but also at targeting working people across Latin America. From Argentina to Brazil, from Venezuela to Ecuador to Colombia itself, the U.S. rulers anticipate that the resistance to assaults on the economic conditions and political rights of workers and peasants, and to imperialist military intervention, will only increase as the world economic crisis deepens. And they are readying themselves to try to meet that

resistance with brutality in order to defend their class interests.

Washington continues to use the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, for bombing exercises to prepare its military aggression abroad. The massive destruction of the resources of that island and the callous disregard for the lives and livelihoods of its residents at the hands of the U.S. military are only a piece of the conditions imposed on the Puerto Rican people by U.S. imperialism for over 100 years, as a direct colony of the United States.

The U.S. government uses its military bases in Latin America and throughout the world as launching pads for bloody assaults against our brothers and sisters. They have already deployed tens of thousands of troops in the Middle East as part of their buildup toward war against the people of Iraq. U.S. and British forces have stepped up the pace and intensity of their bombing of Iraq, targeting Iraqi defense systems. They are openly preparing a ground invasion of that country.

This war is one among many wars imperialism will launch against the peoples of the semicolonial world. It is part of redividing the wealth and resources of the Middle East—and of Africa, Asia, and Latin America—to strengthen Washington's position against rival imperialist powers. U.S. imperialism has its sights on what it lost with the Iranian revolution of 1979, as well as on the mineral and oil resources of Africa. This coming war will not stop at Iraq's borders.

At the same time, so-called United Nations weapons inspectors are subjecting Iraq to open-ended searches of more than 700 sites. Washington's effort to carry out this attack on Iraq's sovereignty under UN banners is aimed at giving it a thin veil of legitimacy before world bourgeois public opinion, but does not change one iota the imperialist character of the bloody assault that is on the horizon.

As Fidel Castro explained in October 1962, during what is known as the Cuban Missile Crisis: "The first thing that ought to be inspected are the U.S. bases from which invasions are launched.... This demand for inspection aims to validate the U.S. presumption that it can violate our right to freely act within our borders, that it can dictate what we can or cannot do within our borders.

"Anyone who tries to come and inspect

Cuba should know that he'd better come in full combat gear."

Other imperialist powers in North America and Europe will line up behind a war against Iraq, including those governments that are today attempting to keep at arm's length from Washington. Just as the U.S. rulers aim to advance their control of the world's resources, the governments of Germany, France, Canada, Greece, and other imperialist powers also want to ensure their piece of the pie. It is the responsibility of the anti-imperialist forces within these countries to fight against their own governments during the preparations for this war, as we, the revolutionary forces inside the United States, are doing. This is the greatest act of solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the semicolonial world who are being, and will continue to be, slaughtered by the same imperialist governments that assault our rights at home.

While we cannot predict the outcome, this war will set into motion uncontrollable forces. The Palestinian people continue to refuse to get on their knees in the fight against Israeli dispossession of their homeland. Cuba continues to stand as an example in the world of what is possible when working people take political power and begin to organize a new society in the interests of the toiling majority. And working people inside the United States continue to fight to defend our living and working conditions against the effects of the capitalist economic crisis.

We stand in solidarity with every worker in the United States who presses for their interests against the attacks of the government. We will not subordinate our struggles to the U.S. rulers' war.

Through their actions around the world, the imperialists will create millions of revolutionaries from the United States to the Middle East and Africa, from Asia to Latin America. Those who join this resistance will become over time the proletarian army that will develop the ability, leadership, and organization to overthrow the rule of the capitalists. We stand with anti-imperialist fighters everywhere in our pledge to fight to take political power out of the hands of the warmakers in the United States. It is only through making a socialist revolution that workers, farmers, and young people in the United States can finally rid the world of the final empire and the enemy of humanity—U.S. imperialism.



# Protests against INS arrests in Los Angeles

**Continued from front page**

brother was required to register.

“All of our fundamental civil rights have been violated by these actions,” said Ban Al-Wardi, an attorney who saw 14 of 20 her clients arrested when she accompanied them to register.

Kourosh Reyhanyfar, 39, who works as a window installer, was one of those arrested. A British citizen born in Iran, Reyhanyfar said he heard about the new INS reporting requirements on the radio. He and his wife came to this country on tourist visas in 1999 and decided to stay, applying for extensions every six months. In the middle of the third exten-

sion, they took advantage of a change in the law and paid \$1,000 each to apply for a green card. They received work permits, Social Security numbers, and driver’s licenses.

When Reyhanyfar took off work from his construction job and reported to the INS, “They asked why I didn’t complete the third visa extension, and I explained the situation. I did this, I did that, we got work permits, and now we are waiting for our green cards,” he said. The answer didn’t satisfy the INS cops. Reyhanyfar was handcuffed and taken to a holding area. “We went from the eighth floor to the basement, past many people, and it was humiliating to be in handcuffs.”

Fifteen hours later, around 3:00 a.m., Reyhanyfar was fingerprinted and put into a bus and taken to the INS jail in Lancaster, California. There, he explained, he was strip-searched, his belongings were confiscated, and he was put in a 50-bed barracks. After being held three days, he was released on \$1,500 bail and is now awaiting a court hearing to determine whether he will get a green card or be deported.

“It was a nightmare,” he said. “I wasn’t angry so much as shocked and humiliated.”

His wife, Sepideh Reyhanyfar, one of the thousands who demonstrated December 19 outside the federal building, held a sign that

said, “Whatever happened to liberty and justice for all?”

Attorney Soheila Jonoubi said she saw a 16-year old pulled from the arms of his crying mother. Jonoubi said the mother had permanent resident status and that her husband, the boy’s stepfather, is a U.S. citizen. The teenager came to this country in July on a student visa and was on track to gain permanent residence, she said.

Some of those arrested were hosed down with cold water before finding places to sleep on the concrete floors of cells, reported Shawn Sedaghat, an attorney who represents more than 40 people who voluntarily went to register and were detained.

“We have rights, and we will not go away simply because we are not citizens,” said Tareef Nashashibi, president of the Arab-American Republican Club of Orange County, at a December 20 protest of 450 people at the Sequoia Conference Center.

Hussam Ayloush, executive director of the Council on America-Islamic Relations of Southern California, said, “This new McCarthyism against Muslims must end. Are you going to deport us all?”

Other groups participating in that protest meeting included the American Civil Liberties Union, League of United Latin American Citizens, Los Angeles County Bar Association, National Lawyers Guild, and the Japanese American Citizens League.

*Barry Schier contributed to this article.*

## INS registration requirement targets temporary residents from 20 nations

**BY RÓGER CALERO**

Thousands of men and teenage boys around the country face deportation after going to Immigration and Naturalization Service offices to comply with a new national registration program targeting immigrants from countries labeled “terrorist” by the U.S. government. U.S. officials have indicated they may eventually expand this “tracking” program to other immigrants.

On December 19, thousands demonstrated at the federal building in Los Angeles to protest the roundup of an estimated 500–700 Iranians and other Middle Eastern immigrants who were arrested when they came to register at the INS offices (see accompanying article).

Attorney General John Ashcroft issued a federal order in November requiring male noncitizens over the age of 16 who come from a list of 20 countries—mostly from the Middle East and South Asia—to be interrogated, photographed, and fingerprinted by INS agents.

The December 16 deadline was for immigrants from Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, and Libya. Those from 15 other targeted countries are required to register by January 10. These are Afghanistan, Pakistan, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Oman, Somalia, Eritrea, and north Korea.

Armenia, originally on the list, was dropped without explanation after an outburst of protests from Armenian-American organizations.

Ashcroft established the registration program—dubbed the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System—on the basis of the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act, which gives the government a broad authority to exclude or deport noncitizens and to set up an “alien address report system.” The government says it has the power to extend the registration requirements to “any class of aliens” except permanent residents or those granted political asylum.

The first stage of the program began September 11 last year when the INS began registering visa holders as they entered the country. Now the INS is registering male visitors over the age of 16 who entered the country before September 30 and “who may pose a national security concern” as defined by their countries of origin.

Foreign visitors staying in the country for more than one month are required to register with the INS as they enter the country. Subsequently they will have to register every year or face fines, imprisonment, or deportation. They also have to inform the INS when leaving the country.

Under the new program the government expects to have files by 2005 on 35 million visitors who come to the United States each year, including tourists, business travelers, students, and temporary workers from the 20 countries.

In the weeks leading up to the registration deadline, the INS ran announcements on local Farsi-language and other radio stations encouraging those required to register to go to the INS offices, assuring them a routine procedure.

Once there, they found out a different picture. They were asked to provide proof of residence, e-mail addresses, additional forms of identification other than their passports and immigration documents, information about their parents, and any contacts or

friends in the United States. Many have been asked questions such as how frequently they go to the mosque, according to spokespeople of the Council of American Islamic Relations. Some have been denied the request to have their lawyer present during the interrogations.

A background check was run on the spot against various criminal and INS databases. Those showing a criminal record or a violation of immigration laws—including many

who have pending applications for permanent residence or asylum—were arrested and subjected to deportation proceedings. The *Los Angeles Times* reports that up to one fourth of those who showed up at the Los Angeles INS office were arrested.

Ashcroft has said that state and local police are now being asked to arrest immigrants accused of criminal or immigration violations, using data poured into the FBI’s national database.

## UMWA faults gov’t report on mine disaster

**Continued from front page**

members of the United Mine Workers along with the miners’ families have fought to expose the callous disregard for safety by the company that led to this disaster.

On the first anniversary of the explosion more than 300 miners and family members attended the unveiling of a memorial at the West Brookwood Church, next to the JWR No. 5 mine. The names of the miners are engraved on a black granite slab that can be seen from the road going to the mine. Later that afternoon a ceremony and cookout were held at the union hall, where UMWA Local 2368 dedicated another memorial—a glass case enclosing 13 hard hats—12 black and one white—for each of the 12 UMWA members and one foreman who died.

The church gathering and union ceremony marked the second year in a row that union miners in Alabama observed a memorial day to honor their fallen brothers and did not work. Last year the union held a memorial day on September 27 in response to the deaths of the men.

Many of the families and miners have spoken out in newspapers and on television holding Jim Walter Resources responsible for the miners’ deaths. Charles Nail, whose father died in the explosion, told the *Tuscaloosa News*, “The way I look at it, they murdered my dad. Last year, I believed they would do the right thing. Wrong.”

Nail was referring to the problems the families have had receiving compensation from Jim Walter, including a special fund supposedly set up by the company for the families. After making an initial \$20,000 payment, the company said it would release another \$29,000 if each family agreed to give up the right to sue over the administration of the fund.

In the UMWA statement, union president Roberts asked, “If those violations had been followed-up on and rectified, could lives have been saved? It’s an important question and it deserves a full and complete answer.”

A March 2002 letter from UMWA safety director Joe Main to MSHA described “highly disturbing problems with MSHA’s enforcement at the mine.” An Associated Press story pointed to the agency’s “practice of describing major violations as only minor infractions and failing to make follow-up inspections to determine whether problems were fixed.”

“Inspectors didn’t respond to No. 5 miners’ requests for increased inspections when serious hazards existed,” Main wrote, “and miners were discouraged from filing health and safety complaints.” The UMWA had already accused MSHA of being too cozy with Alabama coal companies, and charged five years before the 2001 explosion that the agency had given the company the names of miners who made safety complaints, a



Militant/Brian Taylor

**UMWA members and relatives attend September 21 memorial program held for miners killed in the explosion of Sept. 23, 2001, in Brookwood, Alabama.**

move that opens workers up to victimization and harassment by the employers.

In December 2001, just three months after the explosion and the investigation still not complete, JWR reopened the mine. Coal production began in the spring of 2002.

**Miner wins lawsuit against JWR**

In another development, on December 12 a former miner at the No. 5 mine won a \$1 million compensatory and \$500,000 punitive damage award in a wrongful termination case against Jim Walter Resources. Vonnie Riles, a miner with 27 years experience, was just 800 feet from the explosion. Riles was diagnosed with severe post-traumatic stress syndrome and was ordered by his doctor not to work underground. Riles returned to work in December 2001 and was assigned a job on the surface. After he filed a workers’ compensation claim JWR ordered Riles to go underground or face termination. After a two-week trial, the jury ruled that the miner had been wrongly fired.

In the four weeks before the explosion, there were three ignitions or fires, all on No. 4 section where the explosions happened. One of the miners, Matthew Wright, who worked on No. 4 section, told the *Chicago Tribune*, “The whole week prior [to the explosion], we stopped running coal. We shut her down. We didn’t have enough air.” Tens of thousands of cubic feet of air are needed at the No. 5 mine to sweep away the excessive amounts of methane that is released as the Blue Creek coal seam is cut.

“They put us [to work] in the mud hole to punish us,” miner Charles Ogletree explained. Longwall crew members said that the first worker to stand up to the bosses about the dangerous levels of methane was 38-year-old Clarence “Bit” Boyd, who was killed in the explosions.

Rock dust, non-combustible pulverized limestone, is spread over the mine floor and walls to dilute and neutralize explosive coal dust. The dust samples taken by the mine inspectors should contain at least twice as much limestone as coal. The investigation after the explosion found 121 of 123 mine dust samples from the area where the blasts occurred did not contain the required levels of inert limestone.

Robert Tarvin, a member of UMWA 2368, is a rock duster and was in the mine during the explosion. Tarvin told the *Militant*, “Starting in the late 1990s the company started cutting corners and cutting back. Sometimes they would go two or three weeks without rock dusting. Other times they would only let us rock dust for 30 minutes instead of an hour.”

Commenting on MSHA’s role in the explosion, Tarvin explained that “MSHA’s responsible, too. MSHA comes underground and the bosses have no respect for them. They point out a little problem while ignoring a major problem right next to it. They play golf with company officials.”

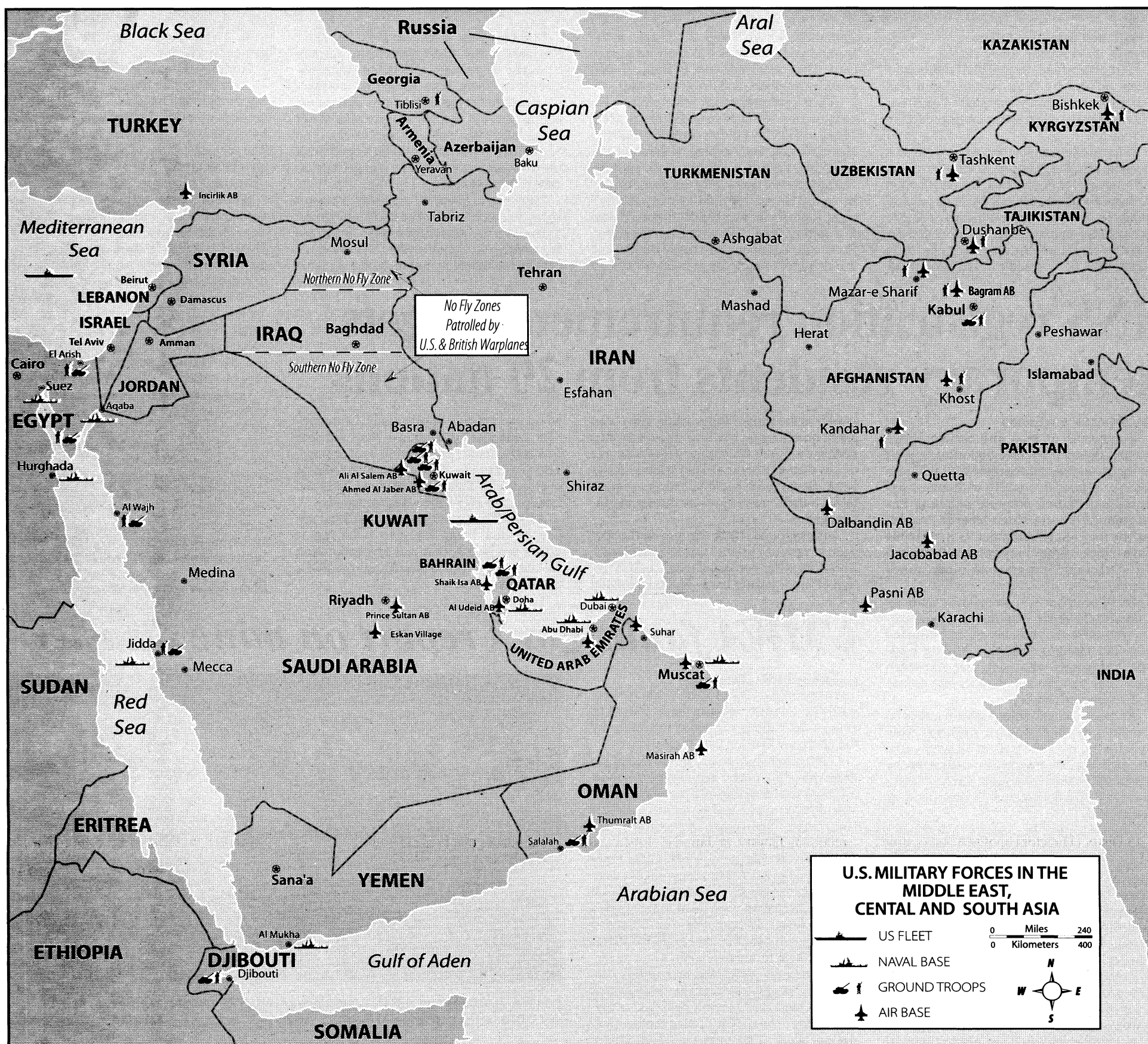
Walter Industries, Inc., a Tampa, Florida, -based homebuilding and manufacturing company, began operating the Brookwood, Alabama, mines in 1976. Four JWR mines accumulated 10,930 safety violations over the past six years.

The company’s no. 4 mine had four deaths since 1995—more separate fatal incidents than any other U.S. coal mine during that period. The operating income from the JWR mines rose 266 percent at the end of the June 2002 quarter. Revenues from coal and methane gas sales were \$238.6 million in 2001.

*Clay Dennison is a member of UMWA local 2133 in Oak Grove, Alabama.*



# Imperialist forces in Mideast, South Asia



Map by Mike Shur/Militant

**The Central Command (Centcom) of the U.S. armed forces presently has some 60,000 military personnel in the region stretching from Central Asia to East Africa. Washington has announced plans to double the number of troops in the New Year. Bases, naval forces, and troop concentrations are pictured in the map above.**

## ISRAEL

Equipment is stored here for U.S. Marines, Special Forces troops, and Air Force. \$500 million worth of ammunition for war-time contingencies in at least six sites in Israel.

## KUWAIT

Military personnel: more than 12,000, including 5,000 at army command center in Camp Doha. Hundreds of Army and Marine command staff.

Warplanes: 80 aircraft, including planes that patrol southern "no-fly" zone. A total of 210 U.S. and British aircraft patrol these zones in the north and south.

Storage: U.S. forces have built 37 huge warehouses in Kuwait and Qatar. In each country they have stored equipment and vehicles for an armored brigade, including 115 tanks, 60 fighting vehicles, 100 armored personnel carriers, and 20 howitzers.

## SAUDI ARABIA

U.S. Air Force command center at Prince Sultan Air Force Base. Military personnel: 5,000, mostly Air Force.

The Prince Sultan Air Base, with 72 warplanes, is the command headquarters for attacks on "no-fly" zone in the south.

## BAHRAIN

U.S. Navy and Marine command centers. Headquarters for the Fifth Fleet and regional headquarters for U.S. Marine Corps. Military personnel: 4,200.

Warplanes: Shaikh Isa Air Base hosts bomber and fighter aircraft.

## QATAR

Military personnel: 3,300. Some 1,000 military planners are being stationed at Camp As Sayliyah, the new Central Command.

Al-Udeid Air Base has longest runway in Gulf, 10,000-troop capacity, and is being expanded by U.S. forces.

Storage: see listing for Kuwait.

## OMAN

Military personnel: 3,000, mostly Air Force. British air force HQ is in Oman.

Warplanes: 24, including B-1B bombers. Storage: equipment and fuel stored for three bases and 26,000 support personnel.

## JORDAN

In August and October U.S. forces conducted exercises with Jordanian army. Oman and Kuwait joined October maneuvers.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Military personnel: 500, mostly Air Force.

U.S. reconnaissance and refueling aircraft use UAE bases.

Storage: some military equipment.

## TURKEY

Military personnel: 1,700 U.S. and "allied" personnel, including 1,400 maintain-

ing, outfitting, and flying F-15 and F-16 fighters. The Turkish military is also reportedly planning to send up to 70,000 troops into northern Iraq in the event of a U.S.-led invasion to counter potential for Kurdish rebellion.

Warplanes: about 60, most of which are at Incirlik air base, the base for patrols of the northern "no-fly" zones in Iraq.

## DJIBOUTI

Military personnel: 800, including some 400 Special Operations troops.

## DIEGO GARCIA

(Outside area of map) British colonial outpost in the Indian Ocean.

Military personnel: 1,900, mostly Air Force.

Warplanes: fleet of eight U.S. B-52 heavy bombers. B-2 Stealth bombers are also being stationed here.

Used by Washington as a staging point in the Gulf war.

## AFGHANISTAN

Washington has maintained an occupation force of some 9,000 troops since its invasion just over one year ago, along with a 5,000-strong United Nations force centered in Kabul. In addition to the Bagram Air Force Base near Kabul, U.S. forces maintain airfields throughout the country.

## PAKISTAN

Some 1,000 U.S. troops are officially stationed here, as well as warplanes in the southern region of the country. Pakistan served as an important staging area during

the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in the fall of 2001, when 80,000 Pakistani troops played a support role alongside U.S. forces.

## KYRGYZSTAN

The 376th Air Expeditionary Wing provides combat air support and airlift for forces in Afghanistan as well as aerial refueling of coalition aircraft. Some 1,000 U.S. troops are deployed.

## UZBEKISTAN

Uzbekistan is allowing U.S. forces to use Soviet-era military bases.

## AT SEA

**On ships in Arab-Persian Gulf and Mediterranean Sea:**

Military personnel: 25,000.

Ships: aircraft carriers *Constellation* and *Harry S. Truman*, each of which holds 70 warplanes. Each of their battle groups includes a number of warships and supply craft.

## EUROPEAN FORCES NOT LISTED ABOVE:

Roughly 1,250 British soldiers are deployed in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, stationed there originally for the U.S.-led assault on Afghanistan. Another 1,175 British troops, mostly Royal Air Force personnel, operate alongside their U.S. counterparts in attacking the "no-fly" zones over northern and southern Iraq. Officials in London have said that they plan to deploy 30,000 soldiers in the war on Iraq.

Spanish and German ships patrol the seas near the Horn of Africa in coordination with U.S. command.



# Committee to defend Calero launches tour

**Continued from front page**  
meet legal fees and other expenses, which are rapidly adding up,” said PRDF director John Studer in a December 21 interview from the Manhattan offices of the defense committee.

Calero will begin his tour with speaking engagements in Minnesota’s Twin Cities. He will be addressing the broadest possible audiences, including unionists, working journalists, fighters for immigrant rights, and others.

The defense committee has been organized in the expectation that the fight will be a hard-fought one. “We are locked in a toe-to-toe battle with the government over Calero’s right to live and work in this country, and over rights that are important to all, native-born and immigrant alike,” Studer said.

“There is no reason for us to think they knew who they had in their jail when they first arrested Calero, but with the support that was immediately organized, they quickly knew they were in for a fight.”

**Arrested during reporting assignment**

The 12-year permanent resident was arrested by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents as he returned from a reporting assignment abroad.

During his two weeks outside the country, Calero first covered an international conference, held in Havana, Cuba, on the economic crisis in Latin America and the Caribbean. He then reported on two events in Guadalajara, Mexico. One was the annual international book fair, the largest in Latin America. The other was a Latin American and Caribbean student conference. On December 3, on his return from Guadalajara, he was arrested at Houston Intercontinental Airport by INS agents and locked up in an immigration jail.

Letters of protest calling for Calero’s release started to pour in after his two newspapers appealed for support. On December 13 District Director Hipolito Acosta paroled him on his own recognizance.

The exclusion hearing originally scheduled for December 17 inside the jail will be rescheduled before an immigration judge in Houston, Studer said.

In charges presented to Calero, INS officials assert that he cannot be admitted into the United States because he was convicted in 1988 on charges of selling an ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop when he was in high school. They claim they can do this even though the INS itself waived this conviction in 1990 when it granted Calero permanent residence status, and then renewed his green card 10 years later.

**Case has struck a chord**

“I have found that my case strikes a chord with a lot of people,” Calero told the *Militant*. “There are thousands and thousands of immigrant workers who are being picked up by the INS as they return from visits abroad.

“The INS has poured data from federal and state criminal records into its computer sys-

tem, and many people are being flagged for minor charges on their record from years or decades ago, including permanent residents.”

“Everyone knows someone who went through what I went through as a youth,” Calero said, referring to the 1988 conviction cited by the INS, as it continues to retroactively apply the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act. The act expanded the list of offenses that would be grounds for deportation.

“The fact that I was arrested as I was carrying out my reporting work has also outraged a lot of people who see this as an attack on my right to live and work as a journalist in this country, and an attack on others in the same situation.

“That’s why many are itching for a fight that opposes these attacks,” said Calero.

“Now is the time to broaden the campaign to demand the INS drop its exclusion proceedings against me,” he said. “My parole doesn’t change the fact that I face deportation.”

Faced with a flood of protest letters and petitions, INS officials “made a calculated decision to release me,” he said. “It was a maneuver to deflect the pressure.”

Among the most recent protest messages to the INS is one from Jeremy Dear, general secretary of the National Union of Journalists in the United Kingdom (see page 12 for excerpts of messages).

Julian Petley, chair of the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, also in Britain, sent a letter that emphasized the issues of reporters’ rights and freedom of the press that are bound up in the case.

Don Seaquist, secretary-treasurer of

## Protesters in Chicago demand INS release workers rounded up at airport



Militant

**Some 100 protesters demonstrated at Chicago’s O’Hare airport December 21 against the arrest of 47 airport workers. The charges range from use of false Social Security numbers to not including past convictions on job applications. Another 500 more have had their security clearances revoked while they are being investigated; many face deportation proceedings. The December 10 sweep at O’Hare is part of a nationwide crackdown called Operation Tarmac that has resulted in more than 800 arrests in airports across the country. The protest was organized by the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and the Chicago Interfaith Committee on Workers Issues.**

UFCW Local 789, in St. Paul, Minnesota, noted that in 2000, when Calero worked at the Dakota Premium meatpacking plant in St. Paul, he had “continually stood tall defending the right of employees to organize a union.” Reporting him, he wrote, will “fan the flames of injustice and bring to light

another in a long series of improper actions on the part of the federal government, all in the name of antiterrorism.”

Fernando González Llort, one of the five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and jailed by the U.S. government on conspiracy

**Continued on Page 15**

# Rockefeller drug laws: class-biased and racist

**PAUL PEDERSON**

“When I was granted clemency and subsequently released from Green Haven correctional facility in Jan. 31, 2001,” said Terrence Stevens, “I left behind thousands of nonviolent low level drug offenders warehoused in a brutal and sadistic prison system. Even with advanced Muscular Dystrophy, I was subjected to a daily dose of the most hideous form of racism. If they treated me that way, you can imagine how they treat prisoners who can walk.”

Stevens is one of more than 150,000 people in New York State who have been sent to prison under the Rockefeller drug laws since 1980. During those same years, the prison population in New York State has tripled, and the percentage of the prison population serving time for drug offenses has gone from 9 percent to 32 percent.

Convicted of possession of 5 ounces of cocaine in 1993, Stevens got the minimum of 15 years to life. In 1994, he spent 40 days in solitary confinement for “interfering with a routine strip-search” because he was physically incapable of pulling down his pants.

The New York laws are named after Nelson Rockefeller, the governor who signed them

into law in 1973. They place mandatory minimum sentences of 15 years to life in prison for the sale of two ounces or possession of four ounces of a narcotic drug.

The racist nature of these laws and their enforcement, and of the capitalist “justice” system in general, is borne out by the statistics. A study released earlier this year revealed that Blacks account for 15.9 percent of the population of New York but 54.3 percent of the prison population. Latinos account for 15.1 percent of the state’s population and 26.7 percent of its prisoners.

For drug offenses the figures go up. Blacks and Latinos account for 94 percent of all drug felons sent to prison, and 60 percent of those convicted in the three lowest classes of drug felonies involving only minute amounts of drugs.

Similar minimum sentencing laws for drug offenses are on state law books around the nation, as well as at the federal level. As a result the mean prison sentence nationwide for a crack cocaine offense is 10 years, two more than the average for violent crimes.

While Blacks and Latinos constitute one-quarter of the total population, they account for more than 1.2 million of the 2 million people locked up in U.S. prisons—a total of 63 percent. In 12 states between 10 and 15 percent of the population of adult Black men is incarcerated.

The U.S. prison population more than doubled in the past decade. Today, with 5 percent of the world’s people, the U.S. has 25 percent of its prisoners.

**Resistance grows**

A group of women whose loved ones are imprisoned under the Rockefeller laws began organizing weekly protest vigils in 1998 outside Manhattan’s Rockefeller Center. They took the name “New York’s Mothers of the Disappeared” after a group in Argentina of mothers of victims of state terror.

Terrence Steven’s mother, Regina, a school cafeteria worker, is a member. It was through the group’s efforts that Stevens was granted clemency in 2001. Both mother and son continue to be active in the fight.

Last year the Mothers of the

Disappeared set up an office in Tulia, Texas, the site of a 1999 drug sweep in which 12 percent of the town’s Black population was arrested. Of the 46 people put in handcuffs on the testimony of one white undercover cop, 40 were Black. Thirteen of the Tulia defendants are still locked up in Texas prisons.

The Mothers of the Disappeared are not alone in organizing protests. Among other actions, vigils and demonstrations are held regularly in New York, including a sit-in outside New York Governor George Pataki’s office on October 30 in which 11 people were arrested, including Mayla Rockefeller, the granddaughter of the governor who signed the laws.

This ongoing fight made the laws a focus of debate during the New York governor’s race, with all of the candidates pledging to reform them if elected. Following his reelection, Governor George Pataki reversed his campaign promise. “I’m not about to turn violent criminals out on the streets in the name of drug law reform,” he declared December 18, as he announced that his administration had refused to negotiate a bill to reform the laws.

## Support the Róger Calero Defense Committee

- Send messages to INS District Director Hipolito Acosta demanding that the exclusion moves against Calero be dropped. Messages can be faxed to (281) 774-5989; or mailed to him at the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 126 Northpoint Drive, Houston, TX 77060. Copies should be sent to the Róger Calero Defense Committee, Box 761, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10007.
- Sign and distribute petitions demanding the INS drop the exclusion of Róger Calero. A fact sheet and petition are available on the *Militant’s* web site at [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com)
- Funds are urgently needed to meet rapidly mounting legal and other expenses. Defense campaign backers in every city need to raise thousands of dollars for the committee. Organize phone calling for donations, seek honoraria for speaking engagements, and take collections at public meetings. The goal is to raise over \$50,000 by the end of January. Contributions are tax-deductible.

## Róger Calero Defense Campaign Tour

The Róger Calero Defense Committee has launched a speaking tour of Calero in cities around the country to broaden the fight to stop his deportation by the INS. Below is the schedule for the first stops of the tour. Requests for additional tour dates can be made to the committee.

**Twin Cities, Minnesota** Dec. 26–29

**Des Moines, Iowa** Dec. 30–Jan. 1

**Chicago** Jan. 2–5

**Omaha, Nebraska** Jan. 6–8

**Twin Cities** Jan. 9–11

Jan. 11: 6:00 p.m. Fund-raiser event at the UFCW Local 789 hall; 266 Hardeman Ave., South St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Los Angeles** Jan. 12–15

**San Francisco** Jan. 16–18

**Miami** Jan. 20–22

For more information or to send a contribution, contact the Róger Calero De-

fense Committee; Box 761, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10007, or call *Perspectiva Mundial* at (212) 243-6392; e-mail: [themilitant@compuserve.com](mailto:themilitant@compuserve.com)









# Lott’s racist views are not unique in Senate cloakroom

BY SAM MANUEL

Five apologies, one nationally broadcast on Black Entertainment Television, were not enough to save Trent Lott’s position as leader of the Senate majority. Not even his last-minute declaration of support for affirmative action. On December 20 Lott an-

## NEWS ANALYSIS

nounced that he would step down from the post but not resign his seat in the Senate.

Lott told those at a 100th-birthday gala for South Carolina senator Strom Thurmond that he was “proud” his state voted for Thurmond’s 1948 presidential bid and that the United States would have been “better off” if the segregationist candidate had won.

Other senators and congresspeople have voiced outrage at Lott’s racist remarks and his longstanding racist record, from voting against extensions of the Voting Rights Act to cultivating ties to the Council of Conservative Citizens, the renamed White Citizens’ Council.

But Senator Lott’s remarks are not unique in the Senate or House. They are part of the Congressional cloak-room parlance of not a few Republican and Democrat politicians.

Sen. Conrad Burns, a Montana Republican, told a reporter during his 1994 campaign that a constituent asked him “how can you live back there with all those niggers” in Washington. Burns’ reply: It’s “a hell of a challenge.” Asked later why he didn’t chal-

lenge his constituent’s use of the word “nigger,” Burns answered, “I never give it much thought.”

Senator Ernest Hollings, a Democrat from South Carolina, joked to reporters in 1993 about African leaders who attended trade conferences in Switzerland, saying that “rather than eat each other, they’d just come up [to Switzerland] and get a square meal.”

Commenting on the subject of race during a television interview last year, Democratic senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, who was once a high official in the Ku Klux Klan, said, “There are white niggers.... I’m going to use that word.”

During his campaign Georgia Republican senator-elect Saxby Chambliss opined that to fight terrorism “every Muslim that came across the state line should be arrested.”

Utah Republican senator Robert Bennett told an editorial board that George W. Bush would win the Republican nomination unless “some Black woman comes forward with an illegitimate child he fathered.”

In his 1986 Federal Judiciary confirmation hearing Alabama Republican senator Jeffrey Sessions was accused of calling a Black assistant prosecutor “boy,” describing civil rights groups as “un-American,” and stating that he thought the “Ku Klux Klan was all right until he learned they smoked marijuana.”

These are only a handful of the kind of comments that periodically get exposed. In each instance a statement is issued that is a variant on, “I regret the things I have said in the past.”

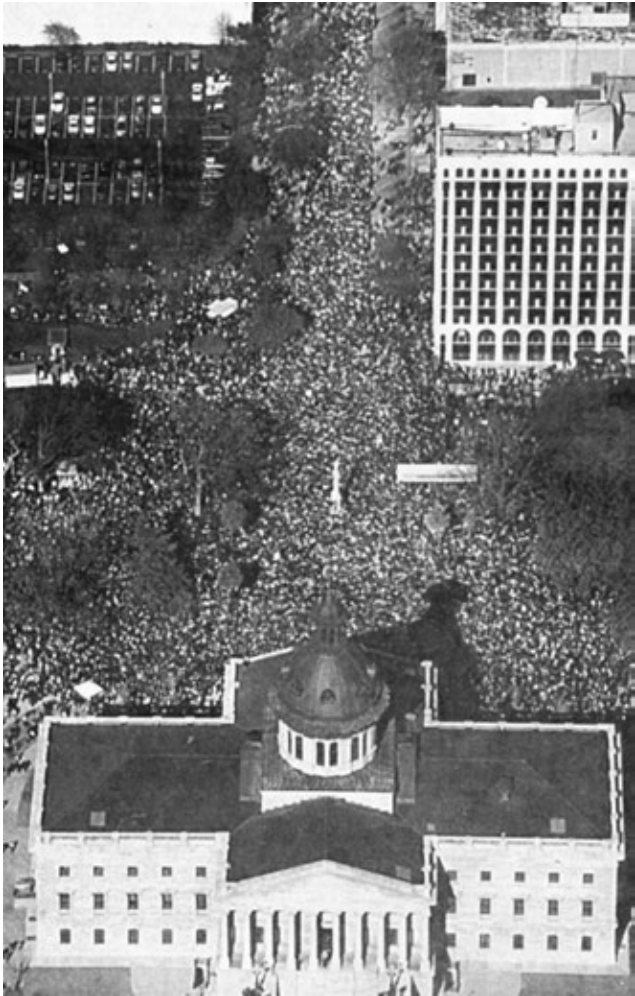
As Lott’s position became increasingly

untenable, a growing list of politicians distanced themselves from him, and finally decided to cut their losses by urging his removal from the Senate majority post.

Florida governor John Ellis Bush said, “It doesn’t help to have this swirling controversy that Senator Lott...doesn’t seem to be able to handle well.” He added, “This can’t be the topic of conversation over the next week.” Secretary of State Colin Powell said he was “disappointed” at Lott’s remarks and that he “deplored” them. President George Bush described Lott’s remarks as “offensive” and “wrong.”

Several Republican senators defended their colleague. Pennsylvania senator Arlen Specter called Lott’s words “foolish to the extreme. But it’s an occupational hazard we have,” he added.

One defense of Lott’s remarks came from Ward Connerly, head of the so-called American Civil Rights Coalition. Connerly, who is Black and an aggressive opponent of affirmative action, explained, “Supporting segregation need not be racist. One can believe in segregation and believe in equality of the races.”



Some 46,000 people marched in Columbia, South Carolina, on Jan. 17, 2000, to demand Confederate battle flag be removed from Capitol building. Dispute over 1948 States’ Rights Party, like that over Confederate flag, is not simply about past but about fight against racism today.

President Bush and other capitalist politicians who have felt compelled to condemn Lott’s remarks have commented on them as if they were simply a thing of the past, not relevant to today. But they have everything to do with the reality of racist discrimination today and the struggles against it.

### Ongoing resistance

The deep understanding of this fact among millions, particularly working people who are Black, and the ongoing resistance to police brutality, attacks on affirmative action, assaults on the right of immigrants, and other social struggles are the source of the maelstrom of denunciations that led to Lott’s fall.

That is why the continued presence of the Confederate battle flag at the South Carolina state house, as well as the recognition of a holiday for the Confederacy or for Confederate leader Jefferson Davis’s birthday by several state governments, have been the focus of ongoing protests and demonstrations, in some cases numbering tens of thousands.

“There are calls now for the ouster of Trent Lott as the Senate Republican leader. I say let him stay. He’s a direct descendant of the Dixiecrats,” wrote *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert on December 12. “Keep him in plain sight. His presence is instructive. As long as we keep in mind that it isn’t only him.”

FROM PATHFINDER

### Malcolm X Talks to Young People

This new, expanded edition includes four talks given to young people in Ghana, the United Kingdom, and the United States in 1964 and 1965; an interview with the Young Socialist magazine; and an enlarged display of photographs. In the last months of his life, Malcolm X spoke out more and more directly about the capitalist roots of racism, exploitation, and imperialist oppression.

The new English-language edition has been released together with the Spanish-language edition *Malcolm X habla a la juventud*. \$15

Online at [www.pathfinderpress.com](http://www.pathfinderpress.com)  
Also available from bookstores, including those listed on page 14.



## What was the States’ Rights Democratic Party?

BY SAM MANUEL

In all the coverage in the big-business media surrounding Trent Lott’s remarks in support of Strom Thurmond’s presidential bid on the 1948 States’ Rights Democratic Party ticket, little of substance has been said or written about what that party was, where it came from, and the political situation in the United States at that time. Segregation is often presented as a bad policy of racial inequality and “separation of the races.” There has been virtually no mention of Jim Crow segregation—or of the rise of the civil rights movement that challenged racist discrimination at that time.

“Jim Crow” was a system of legal discrimination against Blacks codified in the constitutions, laws, and regulations of the states in the South. All aspects of life for Blacks were separate and unequal from birth to death.

The institutionalized segregation reinforced the inferior conditions that Blacks faced in housing, health care, and education. Blacks were legally required to use separate entrances to public places, drinking fountains, bathrooms and swimming pools; paid substandard wages and confined to the dirtiest and lowest paying jobs. This system was enforced with legal terror by southern state governments and extralegal terror including public whippings, lynchings and murder—organized by gangs like the Ku Klu Klan and White Citizens Councils. Lott is known to have been associated with the successor to the latter gang, the Council of Conservative Citizens.

In 1941 A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, led a fight across the country and threatened to organize a national march on Washington to press demands for action against racial discrimination. Among these were demands for federal legislation to end lynchings and to desegregate public facilities, and an end to the poll tax—a payment used to keep Blacks from voting. Explicit prohibition against this practice would not be approved until 1964 with the ratification of the 24th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

In face of these growing struggles, the 1948 National Democratic Convention was splintered over civil rights planks to be added to the platform. In an effort to hold together the New Deal coalition he had inherited from Franklin Roosevelt, President Harry Truman was ready to compromise with the segregationists and settle for only

the planks in the 1944 platform. But the struggles of Blacks and their allies in the labor movement had gathered too much momentum. The new planks were adopted, prompting 35 southern Democratic delegates to walk out. They met in Birmingham, Alabama, and formed the States’ Rights Democratic Party, which came to be known as the Dixiecrats (today historians delicately omit the “Democratic” from their name).

The States Rights Democrats adopted a platform that read in part, “We stand for segregation of the races.... We oppose the elimination of segregation, the repeal of miscegenation statutes.”

### Discrimination by federal government

One of the biggest institutions discriminating against Blacks was the federal government itself. Pointing to Colin Powell, one report in the *New York Times* referred to the military as the most dynamic institution for desegregation in American society. Nothing could have been further from the truth in 1948. Blacks served in segregated units under white officers. Black soldiers being assigned to bases in the South rode in segregated train cars or the back of the bus. Base commanders instructed Black soldiers to observe Jim Crow laws. It wasn’t until 1948 that the federal government ordered the full integration of the armed forces, and segregated military units continued for several years afterward.

One theme repeated in the coverage is that Lott’s remarks would reinforce the view that the Republican Party is opposed to social gains for Blacks. But Jim Crow segregation and racist policies in general have always been carried out with bipartisan support. After winning the 1948 elections, Truman failed to follow through on any of his electoral promises on civil rights. His administration appointed segregationist James Eastland to head the Civil Rights subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

In the 1960s Malcolm X hammered away at the need to break from this bipartisan trap and chart a course of independent political action. In a speech entitled “The Ballot or the Bullet,” Malcolm explained, “They have in the House of Representatives 257 Democrats to only 177 Republicans.... In the Senate, there are 67 senators who are of the Democratic Party. Only 33 of them are Republicans.” Pointing to the Democrats’ control of both houses of Congress, Malcolm

continued, “What alibi do they use when you and I ask, ‘When are you going to keep your promises?’ They blame the Dixiecrats. What is a Dixiecrat? A Dixiecrat is nothing but a Democrat in disguise.”

In fact, the “Dixiecrats” would not defect to the Republican Party until the early and mid-1960s following the victories of the civil rights movement.

Completely missing from the media coverage is any serious treatment of the civil rights movement. In 1954 the Supreme Court ruled that “separate education was inherently unequal,” in the case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. But nearly a decade after that decision, schools throughout the South remained segregated. It would take a movement of hundreds of thousands who through their actions would win the support of millions throughout the country and around the world to bring an end to legal segregation of the schools and the overthrow Jim Crow rule itself. It meant defying the power of segregationist rule by sitting in at lunch counters, libraries, movie theaters; organizing “freedom rides” to desegregate public transportation, standing up to the terror of police departments and the Ku Klux Klan; organizing marches in every nook and cranny throughout the South.

In 1948 the Socialist Workers Party launched its first presidential campaign, nominating Farrell Dobbs for president and Grace Carlson for vice president. Dobbs and Carlson put forward an election platform that demanded:

“Smash the Jim Crow system! Full economic, political, and social equality for the Negro people and other minorities! Pass and enforce legislation to punish lynching, abolish the poll tax, establish a Fair Employment Practices Committee with power to root out discriminatory practices, eliminate segregation wherever it exists! Combat anti-Semitism in all its forms! Wipe out discriminatory immigration policies and open the doors of the U.S. to refugees! Unite the workers of all races for the common struggle against their exploiters!” In regard to military policy, the candidates demanded, “Abolish race segregation in the armed forces!”

On the opposite page are a selection of articles from the *Militant* from 1948 and 1949 that give a feel for the forces that were gathering, and that would explode again in the 1950s and 1960s.



# Support builds for fight against deportation

The following are excerpts from some of the letters sent to the Immigration and Naturalization Service's district director in Houston, Hipolito Acosta, demanding an end to the INS's efforts to deport *Militant* staff member and *Perspectiva Mundial* associate editor Róger Calero.

On December 3 INS agents arrested Calero, a 12-year permanent resident, as he came through Houston Intercontinental Airport on returning from a reporting assignment in Latin America. He was jailed for 10 days, until immigration authorities paroled him after receiving a flood of protest messages like those below. The INS maintains its efforts to deport Calero, based on a 1988 conviction on charges of selling about an ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop when he was in high school. In 1990 the INS waived this conviction and granted him permanent residence; they renewed his legal status in 2000.

❖  
**Don Seaquist, secretary-treasurer, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789, St. Paul, Minnesota.**

My name is Don Seaquist and I am the Secretary/Treasurer of UFCW Local 789 located in St. Paul, Minnesota. I am writing this letter in support of Róger Calero. During a two-year union organizing campaign Róger continually stood tall defending the right of employees to organize a union.

This campaign to organize workers was with Dakota Premium Foods in South St.

federal government, all in the name of anti-terrorism.

**Jeremy Dear, general secretary, National Union of Journalists, United Kingdom.**

I write to express our concern at reports that journalist Róger Calero is facing continued exclusion proceedings.

Róger's detention, the initial confiscation of the tools of his trade and his subsequent treatment appears to undermine his rights as a U.S. resident of 12 years standing.

Moves to exclude him from the U.S. damage the reputation of the U.S. worldwide and give cause for concern. We are particularly concerned that this appears to be an attempt to prevent a journalist from carrying out their profession.

**Jay Miskowicz, staff writer, La Prensa de Minnesota; member, PEN International Freedom to Write and Writers in Prison Committees, Minneapolis, Minnesota.**

As a citizen of the United States who believes in the sanctity of our Bill of Rights and the fundamental right of freedom of expression, I am writing to protest the detention of Róger Calero by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Your actions will be brought to the attention of my students, readers and colleagues.

**Julian Petley, Brunel University, United Kingdom.**

I would like to add my name to the petition demanding an end to the deportation of Róger Calero. I am chair of the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom and a regular columnist for Index on Censorship.

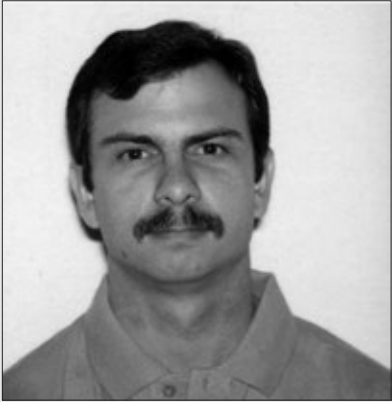
**Susan Severin, president, Marin Interfaith Task Force on Central America, Mill Valley, California.**

The INS detention of Calero at Houston International Airport on December 3 and its attempt to revoke his permanent residence status are an attack on his right

to work as a journalist in this country, and on the rights of everyone.

We protest the INS move to exclude Calero from the United States while he was

## Cuban patriot in U.S. prison backs Calero fight



**Fernando González Llort**

serving prison terms ranging from 15 years to a double life sentence. Their attorneys recently filed a motion for a new trial.

❖  
I extend my solidarity to *compañero* Róger Calero, associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, currently facing detention and an unjust and arbitrary exclusion process by INS officials.

From my position as a political prisoner in a U.S. jail, I demand that *compañero* Calero be released immediately, that INS officials cease the exclusion proceedings they are threatening against him, and that they restore all his rights as a permanent resident of this country.

The arbitrary action against *compañero* Calero is an attack on his political activity and the ideas he professes. This is unacceptable and must be denounced. It is not by chance either that this happened as he returned from a working trip to Havana, Cuba.

I join with all those demanding an end to the unjust situation that Róger Calero faces, and I hope he will soon resume his work on this magazine.

*Fernando González Llort  
Oxford, Wisconsin*

returning home from a reporting assignment at international conferences in Havana, Cuba, and Guadalajara, Mexico.

We demand the INS immediately release Róger Calero, drop its effort to deport him to Nicaragua, and allow him to resume his residence and work in the United States.

**Mac Scott, Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), Coalition for the Human Rights of Immigrants, Prison Moratorium Project, New York.**

I am writing to express our dismay and outrage at the recent detention of Róger Calero by your district of the INS. Our information is that you are attempting to exclude him on the basis of an old marijuana charge from 1988, despite his U.S. residency of 12 years.

We would like to point out that in St. Cyr, the Supreme Court ruled on charges that had been brought prior to 1996, that they could not be held to the same standard as post-1996 charges. The ruling also stated that this is held to especially apply for guilty pleas prior to 1996. Your agency is persisting in applying bad law in this situation despite Mr. Calero's longtime residency establishment.

**Gregory D. Coleridge, American**

**Friends Service Committee, Akron, Ohio.**

As a Quaker social action organization, we believe in the dignity and worth of every human being, regardless of race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, income or political beliefs. We see that of God or good in every person and believe that every person should have their human rights as human beings protected. We believe Mr. Calero's human rights are being violated by the INS.

**Thomas Kleven, professor of law, Texas Southern University, Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Houston, Texas.**

I am sure that numerous other reporters, including some resident immigrants, attended the same newsworthy events he did in Cuba and Mexico without having similar action taken against them. Basing this action on a more than ten-year-old marijuana conviction is an obvious sham, given the INS's reapproval of Mr. Calero's resident alien status since then with full disclosure and knowledge of the facts.

Rather this is about silencing people who disagree with the policies of the Bush Administration, in violation of their free speech rights and of the First Amendment right of Americans to receive information so that they can evaluate the policies of the government.



**Supporters of Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM) at January 21 protest in New York against detention of South Asian and Arab immigrants at immigration jails in New Jersey. DRUM activist is among backers of fight against deportation of Róger Calero.**

Paul, Minnesota. During this tumultuous time for himself and his co-workers, Róger worked with a variety of community groups to bring together people that had many different backgrounds.

His leadership was instrumental in those workers organizing, bargaining, and eventually getting a collective bargaining agreement with their employer.

It is my understanding that Róger has recently been released from jail, and that is a good first step in correcting the injustice that has befallen him. Deporting Róger will serve no purpose but to fan the flames of injustice and bring to light another in a long series of improper actions on the part of the

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Charlotte**  
**Workers' Resistance to the Deepening Economic Crisis.**

Speaker: John Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Jan. 4, 7 p.m. 2110A N. Cannon Blvd., Kannapolis, Tel. (704) 932-0821.

### MASSACHUSETTS

**Boston**  
**The Jewish Question—Why it's a trap to link support of Israel with the fight against anti-Semitism.**

Speaker: Sarah Ullman Fri. Dec. 27, 7:30 p.m. 12 Bennington St. 2nd Floor, East Boston, Tel. (617) 569-9169.

## LETTERS

### Share paper with others

Sorry for such short notice, but they just up and move us without any kind of notice in prison. Could you please note the address change for me? Thanks!

I'd like to take the time to say I really enjoy your paper. I try to share it with others in here so they can get a different view. Sometimes they don't care—it's their loss.

For real freedom,  
*A prisoner  
Texas*

### Appeal for Irish prisoner

I am writing on behalf of my family to ask for assistance in ensuring that my husband, Michael McKevitt, obtains justice in his forthcoming trial in the Republic of Ireland. He has been held on remand in Portlaoise Prison for almost two years.

On March 28, 2001, my husband and I were arrested at our home. When in custody he was informed by a detective inspector that his arrest had been a political decision and that he was being stitched up. After being questioned for 36 hours I was released. However, my husband was charged with membership and directing an illegal organization, namely the IRA, the latter carrying a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. These charges were leveled at him on the word of one person, David Rupert, who is an American citizen of dubious character.

At a recent preliminary court hearing it was disclosed that David Rupert worked for both the FBI and MI5. Mr. Rupert has been promised a resettlement payment of \$3 million from the FBI and an undisclosed amount from MI5 (believed to be in the region of £2.5million) on completion of his testimony. In addition to this, an outstanding IRS debt of \$700,000 was reduced and settled for \$25,000 in November 2001. It was revealed that this self-confessed criminal had been deployed to the Republic of Ireland by the FBI and MI5 without the knowledge of the Irish authorities.

Prior to my husband's arrest, my family was demonised and vilified on a continual basis by the media. It became commonplace that all sections of the media felt they could say what they liked about our family and my husband in particular. This trial by media included publishing front-page photographs with the intention of identifying our young children. This unprecedented, coordinated media onslaught, which continues to this day, has ensured that my husband's name is constantly connected with the Omagh bombing. He has never been questioned nor charged with any offense relating to this tragedy.

It gives me great strength to know that there are individuals and human rights groups who are prepared to travel long distances to ensure that justice is seen to be done.

In conclusion, my family asks for no more than that awarded to any other Irish citizen, the right to a fair trial and to be presumed innocent until proven guilty. We are asking international observers to attend the trial, which is currently scheduled to be held in Dublin's non-jury Special Criminal court on Feb. 11, 2003.

*Bernadette Sands McKevitt  
Dundalk, Ireland*

**The Militant receives many requests from readers behind bars. The Prisoners' Fund makes it possible to send them reduced-rate subscriptions. A prisoner can buy a six-month subscription for \$6 and a one-year subscription for \$12. The Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* offers a six-month subscription for \$3 and a one-year subscription for \$6. To help meet these requests, please send a check or money order, earmarked "Prisoners' Fund," to the Militant, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.**

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



**It's almost funny**—"Washington (AP)—In the post-Enron business world, corporations are training employees how to be ethical,



Harry Ring

just as they teach them about making a sale or balancing the books."

**An ethics grad**—Unions have been assailing the bitter wages and nonequal job opportunities at the

Wal-Mart retail chain. A company spokeshing responded, "There's no division between workers and management, everybody is equal."

**Capitalism works**—The *San Jose Mercury* reported that insiders at 40 companies, armed with earlier info on a pending stock debacle, took home \$3.4 billion by deftly selling their stock on the eve of the crash. That works out to some \$85 million that each "legally" stole.

**Meanwhile**—"The nation's largest pension fund system, California Employees Retirement System has lost \$43 billion since the end of June 2000.... About 58 percent of

the fund's portfolios is invested in corporate stocks."—The *Militant*, December 9.

**All snarled up**—The privatized rail services in the United Kingdom have offered a solution to their inability to run trains on schedule. Reduce asserted congestion by cutting service. We offer an even better idea. Just shut them down completely.

**Gang Busters**—Across the street from Jordan High School in Los Angeles sits a recycling center, including 200 "inert" Navy shells. One exploded and a chunk of metal landed on the school campus. Edward Hayes, a Jordan teacher,

staged a brief sit-in at the campus gate protesting the dangerous situation, with some 20 students joining him. Campus cops busted the teacher.

**The merciful society**—In Las Vegas, Nevada, Thomas Nevius, 46, has spent 20 years on death row, convicted of murder. But because he is mentally retarded, a highly civilized parole board resented him to two life terms. They didn't say if these were to be served simultaneously or consecutively.

**He expected ethics?**—A New York state supreme court judge put a freeze on \$625 million in legal fees for lawyers who handled a suc-

cessful state suit against Philip Morris and other coffin-nail companies. The judge said the estimated \$13,000 an hour fees were "offensive."

**T'is the season**—The *Los Angeles Times* offered a glowing review of two gift catalogs for the bloated rich (A \$450,000 Bentley, etc.). Commented the editor of the Robb Report, "I think a lot of our readers haven't really been impacted by the economy slowdown. They are recession resistant."

**And from us**—Merry Marxmas and a Revo New Year. "The International Party shall be the human race!"

# Campus meeting protests FBI probe of professor

BY TED LEONARD

AMHERST, Massachusetts—Some 150 students attended a December 11 meeting at the university here entitled "The FBI versus The People." Chairwoman Sara Lennox told participants that the decision to call the meeting had been "sparked by the FBI investigation of Iraqi-born Professor Mussaddak Alhabeeb."

In October, Professor Alhabeeb, a US citizen, was visited in his office at the university, the University of Massachusetts-Amherst (UMass-Amherst) by an FBI agent and a campus police officer. The cops told him they were acting on a tip that he held "anti-American views" and questioned him on his loyalty to the United States.

The meeting had also been prompted by news that a campus cop acts as an official liaison with the FBI under the supervision of the latter's Anti-Terrorism Task Force.

Held despite the fact that evening classes on campus were canceled owing to a winter storm, the meeting was sponsored by the Department of Social Thought and Political Economy (STPEC), the Office of ALANA Affairs, the UMass Anti-War Coalition, and an ad-hoc committee of faculty, staff, students, and community members.

Lennox, who works in STPEC, said in introducing the panel that although the speakers would go over the record of the

FBI, the meeting was "not a history class," but an open forum that would disclose and discuss the antidemocratic practices of the federal police.

Bill Newman, head of the Western Massachusetts branch of the American Civil Liberties Union, spoke first, reporting that the ACLU was filing under the Freedom of Investigation Act to get all records from the FBI on "the enlistment of campus security officers to serve the intelligence interests of the FBI within the academic community. We have to guard against any government action that chills speech, inquiry, and debate," he said.

History Department professor Milton Cantor described incidents from the early 20th century in which the U.S. armed forces had been used against the labor movement. He cited the example of 35 leaders of the Industrial Workers of the World who were rounded up by the army in collaboration with the bosses in Seattle during a labor battle there. The immigrant workers and union fighters were put on a sealed train and shipped across the country to Ellis Island for deportation.

"They were refused habeas corpus, and they were denied the right to see lawyers," Cantor said. "It is similar to what we see the government doing today to non-citizens at Guantánamo."

Currently the US is holding more than 600 prisoners at the naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, which it maintains in face of protests by the Cuban government. Some of the prisoners have gone more than a year without seeing a lawyer.

## Cockroaches in corners

Speaker John Bracey of the African American Department recounted his own experiences with the FBI, both in Chicago in the 1960s and more recently at UMass-Amherst. "We need to make a lot of noise," about FBI activity on campus and other abuses, he said. "When you turn on the lights the cockroaches go to the corners."

"For me the first FBI agents rolled up on our shores in 1492 and have been keeping surveillance on us ever since," said Joyce White Deer Vincent, of the Native American Student Support Services, referring to the first landing by ships of the European colonial powers. Native American activists have been closely monitored and targeted by the FBI and other agencies, she said, citing Leonard Peltier as a case in point. Peltier is serving consecutive life sentences in the federal prison at Leavenworth, Kansas, convicted on frame-up charges of killing two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota in 1975.

Greensboro Justice Fund representative Marty Nathan, whose husband Michael Nathan was one of five members of the

Communist Workers Party murdered in 1979 by Ku Klux Klan and Nazi gunmen at an antiracist rally in Greensboro, North Carolina, detailed the role of the FBI in the "Greensboro Massacre." Greensboro police agent and former FBI informant Edward Dawson helped lead the attack, she said. Despite the fact that the attack was filmed by television crews, the six Klan and Nazi members charged with the murders were acquitted in a jury trial.

The last speaker on the panel, Ryan Coughlin, a student and leader of the UMass Anti-War Coalition, said that while today the Bush administration targets Iraq in its so-called "war on terrorism," when "I was young the 'war on terrorism' was against Nicaragua and Grenada." In both those countries the workers and farmers had organized to overthrow U.S.-backed dictatorships in 1979, and had established workers and farmers governments that drew Washington's deep hostility.

In the discussion this reporter urged people to back the fight of *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* reporter Róger Calero against INS moves to exclude him from the country (see article front page). Thirty-five people signed the campaign petition and several contributed to the defense committee's funds.

*Ted Leonard is a meatpacking worker in the Boston area.*

## After 13 years, judge dismisses 5 convictions in N.Y. 'jogger' case



Supporters of five Harlem men who were wrongly convicted of assault and rape of a woman jogging in a New York park celebrate after a judge dismissed their convictions December 19. The men, who were teenagers at the time, were found guilty of the 1989 crime—despite lack of physical evidence or witnesses—in a hysterical climate whipped up by the capitalist media. The youth "confessed" after being subjected to coercive police tactics. They all served out the sentences they received. Sharonne Salaam, bottom right, whose son Yusef spent six years in prison, said, "Nobody can give back the time he spent behind bars." "I'm very angry," added Delores Wise, mother of Kharey Wise, who served 11 years.

## 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO



January 13, 1978

At the end of December President Carter named G. William Miller to replace Arthur Burns as head of the Federal Reserve System, the U.S. central bank.

So why did Carter replace Burns? And will it make any difference in the economy?

The twelve regional banks making up the Federal Reserve System take deposits from private banks, hold money for the federal government, and issue currency. The Federal Reserve acts as the pivot of the monetary and credit system, able to manipulate the amount of money and credit available to the rest of the economy.

The regional reserve banks are not owned by the government but by affiliated commercial banks. The Federal Reserve thus combines features of a government agency and private corporation. A key feature of the board is its "independence." That is, there is no pretense that it is controlled by the electoral process or accountable to the public.

With inflation, unemployment, and cyclical crises growing worse, Democratic and Republican politicians divert attention from the real cause of these ills—the outmoded and decaying capitalist system—by blaming it all on the "Fed."

In fact, the policies of the Federal Reserve are largely dictated by the policies of the rest of the capitalist government. For example, when the government is running a deficit, the "Fed" has little choice but to issue enough money to cover whatever portion of the deficit cannot be financed through sales of bonds to banks and other financial institutions, even though releasing this additional money is highly inflationary.



January 12, 1953

NEW YORK—At a huge mass demonstration in front of City Hall this afternoon, striking members of the Transport Workers Union-CIO roared their approval of President Michael Quill's declaration, "We will strike, strike, strike, until hell freezes over!" They are fighting for the 40-hour week with no reduction in pay.

They are demanding 48 hours pay for 40 hours of work, plus five hours of guaranteed overtime.

Their demand for guaranteed overtime sharply demonstrates the pressure of high living costs. Any one who has ever been packed into a New York bus during the rush hours knows that the only thing worse than paying for the privilege of "riding" in one of these gas-fuming sardine cans is the job of jockeying it through jammed-up traffic on the company-demanded split-minute schedules. Nothing but galloping prices could make any one look for overtime on the nerve-shattering job these men have.

The companies are trying to utilize the strike as an excuse in putting over one of the most brazen swindles yet perpetrated on the long-suffering strap-hangers of this city. Conceding the 40-hour week in "principle," the operators nevertheless insist that they cannot and will not grant it unless City Hall lets them jack up fares another nickel to 15 cents.

What are the facts? A 15 cent fare...means a minimum increased take of \$45 million a year. The N.Y. Times, on the basis of company figures, estimates that to meet the men's demands would cost \$8 million a year. Thus they come out of the deal with an additional yearly profit of \$37 million!



# Lessons of the 1925–27 revolution in China

Printed below are excerpts from *Leon Trotsky on China*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. In 1925–27 a powerful revolutionary upsurge shook the cities and countryside of China, opening the possibility for workers and peasants to take political power, setting an example for working people throughout the colonial world. But the revolution was crushed at the hands of Chiang Kai-shek and his bourgeois and landlord allies. A central cause of the defeat was the

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

disastrous course of the Stalin leadership of the Communist International in directing the Chinese Communist Party to subordinate itself to the capitalist Nationalist Party (Kuomintang), led by Chiang. Copyright © 1976 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

### BY LEON TROTSKY

The world war which is approaching with irresistible force will review the Chinese problem together with all other problems of colonial domination. For it is in this that the real task of the second world war will consist: to divide the planet anew in accord with the new relationship of imperialist forces. The principal arena of struggle will, of course, not be that Lilliputian bathtub, the Mediterranean, nor even the Atlantic Ocean, but the basin of the Pacific. The most important object of struggle will be China,



Scene from Chinese revolution: Canton, China, Dec. 12, 1927. “In the strikes, agrarian uprisings, and military expeditions of 1925–27 a new China was born,” Trotsky noted.

embracing about one-fourth of the human race. The fate of the Soviet Union—the other big stake in the coming war—will also to a certain degree be decided in the Far East. Preparing for this clash of titans, Tokyo is attempting today to assure itself of the broadest possible drill ground on the continent of Asia. Great Britain and the United States are likewise losing no time. It can, however, be predicted with certainty—and this is in essence acknowledged by the present makers of destiny—that the world war will not produce the final decision: it will be followed by a new series of revolutions which will review not only the decisions of the war but all those property conditions which give rise to war.

### Anticolonial struggles

Colonial and semicolonial—and therefore backward—countries, which embrace by far the greater part of mankind, differ extraordinarily from one another in their degree of backwardness, representing an historical ladder reaching from nomadry, and even cannibalism, up to the most modern industrial culture. The combination of extremes in one degree or another characterizes all of the backward countries. However, the hierarchy of backwardness, if one may employ such an expression, is determined by the specific weight of the elements of barbarism and culture in the life of each

colonial country. Equatorial Africa lags far behind Algeria, Paraguay behind Mexico, Abyssinia behind India or China. With their common economic dependence upon the imperialist metropolises, their political dependence bears in some instances the character of open colonial slavery (India, Equatorial Africa), while in others it is concealed by the fiction of state independence (China, Latin America).

In agrarian relations backwardness finds its most organic and cruel expression. Not one of these countries has carried its democratic revolution through to any real extent. Halfway agrarian reforms are absorbed by semiserf relations, and these are inescapably reproduced in the soil of poverty and oppression. Agrarian barbarism always goes hand in hand with the absence of roads, with the isolation of provinces, with “medieval” particularism, and absence of national consciousness. The purging of social relations of the remnants of ancient and the encrustations of modern feudalism is the most important task in all these countries.

The achievement of the agrarian revolution is unthinkable, however, with the preservation of dependence upon foreign imperialism, which with one hand implants capitalist relations while supporting and re-creating with the other all the forms of slavery and serfdom. The struggle for the democratization of social relations and the creation

of a national state thus uninterruptedly passes into an open uprising against foreign domination.

Not a single one of the tasks of the “bourgeois” revolution can be solved in these backward countries under the leadership of the “national” bourgeoisie, because the latter emerges at once with foreign support as a class alien or hostile to the people. Every stage in its development binds it only the more closely to the foreign finance capital of which it is essentially the agency. The petty bourgeoisie of the colonies, that of handicrafts and trade, is the first to fall victim in the unequal struggle with foreign capital, declining into economic insignificance, becoming declassed and pauperized. It cannot even conceive of playing an independent political role. The peasantry, the largest numerically and the most atomized, backward, and oppressed class, is capable of local uprisings and partisan warfare, but requires the leadership of a more advanced and centralized class in order for this struggle to be elevated to an all-national level. The task of such leadership falls in the nature of things upon the colonial proletariat, which, from its very first steps, stands opposed not only to the foreign but also to its own national bourgeoisie.

Out of the conglomeration of provinces and tribes, bound together by geographical proximity and the bureaucratic apparatus, capitalist development has transformed China into the semblance of an economic entity. The revolutionary movement of the masses translated this growing unity for the first time into the language of national consciousness. In the strikes, agrarian uprisings, and military expeditions of 1925–27 a new China was born. While the generals, tied to their own and the foreign bourgeoisie, could only tear the country to pieces, the Chinese workers became the standard-bearers of an irresistible urge to national unity.... In China it was the proletariat that emerged as the primary motive force and potential leader of this movement. But precisely thereby, the proletariat confronted the bourgeoisie with the danger that the leadership of the unified fatherland would not remain in the latter's hands.... It is not at all surprising, therefore, if the Chinese bourgeoisie, represented by Chiang Kai-shek, turned its weapons in 1927 against the proletariat, the standard-bearer of national unity.

January

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# New Year’s greetings to prisoners

**Continued from front page**  
ued to speak out from his prison cell.

Hundreds of other U.S. residents born in Middle Eastern or South Asian countries have been swept up since Washington launched its war drive 15 months ago. More than 1,200 were arrested in the initial Ashcroft Raids. Just days ago Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) cops rounded up more than 500 people from select countries, many of them applicants for permanent residence, who had lined up at the INS offices in Los Angeles to register and be fingerprinted in compliance with a government decree. In face of an outpouring of protests by Iranians and others, who carried signs reading “What’s Next? Concentration Camps?” the cops were compelled to release some. The apt comparison to the herding of Japanese-Americans into internment camps in 1942 is a reminder of how, as imperialist governments go to war, they always crack down on workers’ rights at home.

Likewise, we extend our solidarity to the 600 men from 40 countries who remain locked up at the concentration camp in the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo on occupied Cuban land. We demand their immediate release.

Washington has also jailed at least two U.S. citizens, José Padilla and Yasser Hamdi, classifying them as “enemy combatants” to deny them their constitutional rights. Several U.S. citizens of Yemeni origin are being framed up on “terrorism” charges in Lackawanna, New York.

## Veteran class-war prisoners

- Besides these brothers and sisters behind bars, the *Militant* has campaigned for the release of prisoners who have spent years or decades in prison. They include:
- Leonard Peltier, a fighter for the rights of Native Americans, jailed for a quarter century on frame-up charges in connection with the killing of two FBI agents.
  - Donnie Thornsby, Arnold Heightland, James Daryl Smith, and David Thornsby, members of the United Mine Workers of America. Convicted in 1987 on frame-up charges of killing a scab coal hauler during the 1984–85 Massey strike, they are serving sentences of between 35 and 45 years. Union miner Jerry Lowe was framed up after a 1993 strike at Arch Coal on charges of killing a scab coal hauler.
  - Five Puerto Rican independence fighters remain in U.S. prisons: Oscar López, Haydee Beltrán, Carlos Alberto Torres, Juan Segarra Palmer, and Pedro Colón Almenas. They have been held for as long as 21 years. We celebrate the fact that two other *independentistas*, Antonio Camacho and José Solís, were released last year.
  - Mumia Abu-Jamal, a Black rights fighter was framed up in 1981 on charges of murdering a Philadelphia cop. Last year a judge lifted his death sentence, but he remains locked up.
  - Roger Warren, a gold miner in Yellowknife, northern Canada, serving a life sentence on fabricated murder charges in connection with an explosion that killed nine workers in 1992.
  - Eddie Hatcher, a Native American activist, serving life imprisonment without parole, framed for murder in North Carolina.

# Latin American student conference

**Continued from Page 6**  
ping world capitalism today, she said, but to seek to conquer new markets to prop up their declining system. To pursue their aims they have to confront the resistance of working people around the world, including inside the United States.

“Cuba continues to stand as an example in the world of what is possible when working people take political power and begin to organize a new society in the interests of the majority,” Newton said. “It is only through making a socialist revolution that workers, farmers, and young people in the United States can finally rid the world of the final empire and the enemy of humanity, U.S. imperialism.” (See text of Newton’s remarks on page 6.)

In a theme echoed by many at the conference, Ortega pointed to the election of candidates supported by radical political parties as the way forward throughout Latin America. He cited the recent electoral victories of Luis Inacio Lula da Silva in Brazil and Lucio Gutiérrez in Ecuador, as well as the government of Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, as examples of how to stand up to imperialism.

## Visit to Guadalajara Book Fair

Participants in the OCLAE congress also spent one af-

We also extend solidarity to the countless other political prisoners throughout the world, from Irish republicans fighting for the unification of their country, to Palestinians waging a battle for a homeland.

This defense of political prisoners follows the long working-class tradition going back to the example set by the International Labor Defense. Established in 1925, the ILD defended class-war prisoners regardless of their political affiliation or views, such as Sacco and Vanzetti, who were framed up and executed in 1927. Later, a similar defense campaign was waged for the 18 Socialist Workers Party and Teamsters union leaders jailed on sedition charges for their opposition to the second imperialist world slaughter. Among these was James P. Cannon, the *Militant*’s first editor.

In recent decades the *Militant* has defended class-struggle fighters ranging from soldiers court-martialed for their activity against the U.S. war on Vietnam, to union and political activist Mark Curtis.

Those locked up in U.S. prisons are overwhelmingly workers and farmers. Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans are disproportionately represented. As the U.S. rulers have accelerated their assault on working people, they have used Rockefeller-type drug laws, mandatory sentences, and other measures, leading to a doubling in the U.S. prison population in the past decade. One of every three young Black males today is either in prison, on parole, or on probation. Likewise, the escalation of INS factory raids and other roundups has increased the number of immigrant workers arrested. The ongoing fight against the deportation of Róger Calero, a *Militant* staff writer and *Perspectiva Mundial* associate editor, has struck a chord because tens of thousands of workers face the same situation that he does.

## Fighting for rights behind bars

Those who are thrown in prison are told they forfeit all their rights once the steel doors are locked. But prisoners constantly assert their humanity and fight for their constitutional rights, such as the right to an attorney, to read books and newspapers, and to correspond with the world outside prison walls. And the *Militant* has been part of many of such fights by those behind bars who view the paper as a source of facts and revolutionary political perspectives they need.

The *Militant*’s Prisoner Fund helps make that possible by allowing prisoners to receive a subscription at reduced rates: a six-month *Militant* subscription for \$6 and a one-year subscription for \$12. Checks or money orders, earmarked “Prisoner Fund,” can be made out to the *Militant* and sent to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

The brutality of prisons is a mirror on the criminal character of the capitalist system itself. The *Militant* is part of the fight to build a revolutionary movement through which working people can overturn capitalist rule and take political power—the biggest jailbreak in history. That course will open the road to building a socialist society, based not on safeguarding the wealth and privileges of a few billionaire families, but defending the interests of the vast majority of humanity.

As socialist leader Eugene Debs, who spent years behind bars for his revolutionary activity, put it: “Socialism and prison are antagonistic terms.”

ternoon at the Guadalajara International Book Fair, the largest of its kind in Latin America, and their presence had an impact on the event. Many sought out titles by Cuban publishers, which were prominently displayed because of Cuba’s position as the featured country at the book fair this year. Dozens of students stopped by the Pathfinder Press booth, which featured books on revolutionary struggles around the world as well as speeches by leaders of the Cuban Revolution.

At the OCLAE congress itself, Young Socialists staffed a Pathfinder table, where delegates bought more than 100 titles on revolutionary politics. Many of those attending the congress were familiar with Pathfinder books from previous international political gatherings. For others it was the first time they had seen such literature. The Pathfinder titles that sold the most were *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes; *The Communist Manifesto*, and *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces*.

In the hotel where delegates were housed, the Cuban youth set up an exhibit highlighting different aspects of Cuba’s revolution. It illustrated what in Cuba is called “the Battle of Ideas,” a political offensive to deepen the participation of working people and youth in Cuba’s socialist revolution, central to which is the broadening educational opportunities available to the Cuban people and expanding access to culture.

The campaign to free five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and imprisoned in the United States was a major feature of the exhibit. Students from Cuba used the OCLAE congress to build support for the campaign. At the final session, conference organizers read a statement demanding that Washington release the five.

# Should labor demand airline nationalization?

BY SAM MANUEL

In a letter published in the December 23 *Militant*, Don Gurewitz asked, “With the entire airline industry in crisis...wouldn’t this be an appropriate and ideal time to propagandize for the solution of ‘nationalization under workers’ control’? Is there some reason not to put forward this demand at this time?”

Such a demand is effective if it is advanced by workers in the course of resistance and as a slogan of struggle. There is no fight being organized by the airline unions today, and no struggle-minded leadership in existence or

## REPLY TO A READER

emerging that could promote the slogan to strengthen such a fight and broaden its appeal.

Far from it. In late December US Airways announced that union officials there have agreed to give the company an additional \$200 million in wage and benefit cuts. The bosses have used the threat of liquidation of the airline to get deeper concessions. In response to this blackmail an official of the International Association of Machinists remarked, “We believe the agreement affords US Airways the best opportunity to avoid liquidation and preserve our members’ jobs.”

Like US Airways, United Airlines is using its declared bankrupt status as a justification to press for even deeper concessions. Meanwhile, the United bosses have threatened to file a motion in bankruptcy court to void their contracts with the unions.

The editorial that Gurewitz wrote his letter in response to advocated a break from this subordination of workers’ interests to the fake corporate “family.”

“Rather than tie our future to the employers,” it said, “working people need a fighting perspective to defend the interests of our class. The road for unionists at United to be able to stand up to the bosses is that of broad working-class solidarity. Their efforts to defend hard-won wages, working conditions, and other rights will be strengthened if they join with other workers resisting the same employer assault.”

Fighting along such a course, the labor movement can campaign for the demand to nationalize the airline industry as a response to the anarchy of capitalism, coupling it with a struggle to exercise workers’ power over production. In the absence of such a struggle, nationalization will be a de facto bailout of the bosses by their government.

In fact, the chief spokesperson for the airline industry bosses, Carol Hallett, president of the Air Transport Association, recently proposed nationalization of the airlines as a way of pressuring the government to reduce its demands for them to pay more for extra security measures. “If appropriate action is not take, draconian steps will be necessary,” she said.

## Calero speaking tour

**Continued from Page 9**  
charges, demanded that INS officials stop their efforts to deport Calero and “restore all his rights as a permanent resident of this country.”

Other new backers of the defense campaign include immigrant rights supporters and representatives of religious organizations.

## Newspapers report case

In Athens, Greece, defenders of Calero’s rights translated material from the defense committee. They also forwarded a news brief on the case that was published in the December 18 issue of *Eleftherotypia*, the largest-circulation daily in that country.

Journalist Jesús López Tapia reported Calero’s release in the December 15 *El Día*, the Spanish-language daily in Houston, following up his earlier coverage on Calero’s detention. López quoted Martha Olvera, director of the Coalition for Dignity and Amnesty in Houston, who described the release as a “victory.”

Calero’s case has been publicized on the web sites of the News Media Update; the Weekly News Update on the Americas, published by the Nicaragua Solidarity Network of Greater New York; and Free Speech Radio News.

Supporters of Calero’s case are continuing to write letters of protest to the INS and involving others in the fight. The latest materials from the defense committee are available at the *Militant*’s web site, [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com).

“We shouldn’t miss a beat at every opportunity to raise funds,” Studer emphasized. Supporters of the defense campaign are organizing phone calling to win donations, request honoraria for speaking engagements, and take up collections at political and union events.

Calero was recently invited to a house meeting organized by Juan, a Newark resident who is originally from Ecuador. “I set up a meeting, invited people I know, and six people attended,” he reported.



## ANC debates goals of democratic struggle

BY T.J. FIGUEROA

JOHANNESBURG—The African National Congress held its 51st National Conference December 16–20 at Stellenbosch University near Cape Town.

The choice of location had symbolic resonance, as the more than 3,000 overwhelmingly black delegates were meeting at the Afrikaans-language institution that served as an intellectual cradle of the apartheid system.

The ANC was founded in 1912 and politically led the struggle by millions of workers and peasants against white minority rule that culminated in South Africa's first democratic, nonracial elections in April 1994. For nearly nine years it has been the ruling party in South Africa. Today the ANC-dominated cabinet includes members of the New National Party, the former ruling party of the apartheid regime; the Inkatha Freedom Party; and the Azanian People's Organization. In 1999 the ANC affiliated to the Socialist International, which groups social-democratic parties and unions internationally.

Opening the meeting, ANC president Thabo Mbeki defined the historic goals of the ANC as "the transformation of South Africa into a democratic, united, peaceful, nonracial, non-sexist, and prosperous country."

Mbeki, who is also the South African president, repeated the chief conclusion delivered by former ANC president Nelson Mandela at the organization's previous national conference in 1997: "The principal result of our revolution, the displacement of the apartheid political order by a democratic system, has become an established fact of South African society."

Nonetheless, Mbeki said, "we still have a long way to go before we achieve the goal of creating a nonracial society."

"The bulk of our economy, including the land, remains predominantly white-owned. Wealth, income, opportunity, and skills continue to be distributed according to racial patterns. Accordingly, the overwhelming majority of the poor and the unemployed... are black people," said Mbeki.

"Naturally, the incidence of disease and death, of morbidity and mortality, reflects these racial imbalances. These include the incidence of tuberculosis, AIDS, infectious diseases as a whole, and diseases of poverty."

Mbeki said progress had been made over the past five years under the ANC-led government. Its main accomplishments, he said, "ranged from issues of increased black ownership of productive property, access to houses and social services, larger numbers of black people joining the middle strata, changes in the composition of the social sector made up of professionals, managers, skilled people, students and trainees within the universities...to acquisition of productive land."

The judiciary, he pointed out, had been one of the most recalcitrant sections of the state apparatus, and more blacks and women needed to be appointed to the bench.

### Debate on goals of revolution

Since 1994, public debate over how to realize the historic goals of the democratic revolution has raged, including within the ANC and the two organizations with which it is in formal alliance: the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the country's largest trade union federation; and the South African Communist Party (SACP).

On the economic front, the ANC has pursued "market-friendly policies," tight limits on government spending, and capital investment from abroad in the hope that this will fuel growth and create jobs. Within that framework, it has committed substantial portions of the national budget to housing, health care, education, and other areas of the greatest need for workers and peasants.

Economic growth, however, has only averaged about 3 percent over the past year, far short of the rate needed to create jobs for the 30 percent of the working-age population that is unemployed.

Prior to the conference, the ANC leadership stressed that the party's economic policies had been reaffirmed by a Policy Confer-



Militant/T.J. Figueroa

**October 1 march in Johannesburg during national strike called by unions to protest job losses and sale of state-owned enterprises. While pressing democratic gains in South Africa since it came to office in 1994, ANC has maintained "market-friendly" economic policies, with tight limits on government spending and promoting capital investment from abroad in the hope of fueling economic growth and jobs.**

ence held earlier in the year and that they would not be up for debate. Instead, delegates were urged to focus on "implementation."

While the great majority of ANC supporters are workers and peasants, since 1994 a

growing stratum of middle-class blacks has emerged, fueled by the lowering of racial barriers to employment by the state and various professions. There is also a small but prominent layer of capitalists who are black,

## White House announces missile 'shield' plan

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

President George Bush has announced plans to deploy 10 antimissile interceptors in Alaska and California by 2004. The announcement marks another step by Washington in building an antimissile "shield" designed to give it nuclear first-strike capacity and reinforce its military supremacy in the world.

Washington has not been able to brandish such a monopoly since the early 1950s when Moscow's development of a hydrogen bomb robbed it of its ability to blackmail the workers states. Since then China has built a number of nuclear weapons, along with other countries, including India and Pakistan. Imperialist France and Britain, along with the Israeli colonial settler state, possess substantial nuclear arsenals.

The administration's plans, publicized December 17, will convert the test site at Fort Greely, Alaska, into an antimissile facility. The military base will be equipped with six interceptors designed to shoot down missiles before they reach their target. The Pentagon aims to deploy 10 more interceptor missiles at Fort Greely by 2005 or 2006, according to Defense Department officials. A further four will be installed at the Vandenberg Air Force base in California.

Bush said the initial stage of the antimissile system will also include sea-based interceptors and radar sensors stationed on land, at sea, and in space. Navy cruisers and destroyers equipped with the Aegis system—the most up-to-date radar and satellite-linked surveillance technology—will be armed with 20 interceptors.

Pentagon officials described the missile system as "workable if limited," according to the Washington Post. The network of installations is not as far-flung as some original blueprints, and does not include any space- or air-based components that remain in the earlier testing stages. However, "the missile defense program...will evolve over a period of time," said Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld at a December 17 Pentagon news conference. "It will very likely involve a variety of different locations... and a number of countries," he added.

Lt. Gen. Ronald Kadish, director of the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency, said that at this stage the antimissile program aims to "test, fix, test, fix, that's what we're

doing." He noted that because of "progress in our overall hit-to-kill technology," the government "could take this next, modest step."

### Mixed results in testing

Washington is pushing to introduce the system even though the different aspects of the complex interceptor technology have performed unevenly in tests, with frequent misses alongside some successes. Developmental flight tests began in 1999. On December 11 the Missile Defense Agency conducted a test at Vandenberg, in which a Minuteman II missile was launched at an incoming warhead. The missile missed its mark.

Three weeks earlier a Standard Missile 3 fired from the warship USS *Lake Erie* hit a ballistic missile fired from the island of Kauai, Hawaii. That test "marks the beginning of a six-flight test series to develop an emergency deployment sea-based ballistic missile defense against short to medium range ballistic missiles," the Missile Defense Agency announced November 21.

Bush's decision to deploy the interceptors came six months after Washington's formal withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty signed with Moscow. Although the document officially restricted the development of this type of missile system, it had not stopped Washington from continuing its intensive testing and building program.

Through the withdrawal Washington intentionally left no doubt that it intended to drive ahead with construction and deployment of the missile shield. In his December 17 statement Bush invoked last year's September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. "We will take another important step in countering these threats by beginning to field missile defense capabilities," he said.

In reality, plans for such a system go back almost two decades before September 11, 2001, to the Strategic Defense Initiative or "Star Wars" space-based interceptor program undertaken by the Reagan administration. Although Star Wars was officially shelved, a modified version resurfaced as National Missile Defense under President William Clinton in the 1990s. Bush made the extension and acceleration of that program one of his election planks in 2000.

and these figures exercise substantial influence within the ANC.

Mbeki devoted a portion of his speech to the need to "deracialize" the economy and to promote "black empowerment" in various industries. This comes in the wake of debate over a new mining law that transfers mineral rights to the state, and a charter proposing that mining companies be 26 percent black-owned within 10 years.

### Mandela speaks

"Up to now, no South African political organization has a policy which can rival that of the African National Congress," said Nelson Mandela in his speech to conference delegates. "The lesson of history clearly establishes that voters do not easily forget a political organization that liberated them," he said, citing the decades of post-colonial rule by governing parties in Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere in Southern Africa.

Mandela criticized Washington and London for their "arrogance" in relation to Iraq, saying the U.S. government was unilaterally moving toward war with Baghdad and should not be ignoring the United Nations Security Council.

Both Mbeki and ANC secretary general Kgalema Motlanthe and acknowledged growing problems stemming from the ANC's role as the ruling party, including indiscipline, corruption, and lack of accountability involving ANC cadres in all levels of government.

Since the Bush administration took office the U.S. Congress has approved \$8 billion a year for research and development of the antimissile weapons system. Defense officials say the White House would be seeking an additional \$1.5 billion over the next two years for the projects at Fort Greely and the Vandenberg Air Force Base and other missile system projects.

### Russia a target

Under Clinton the White House had justified constructing an antimissile system as a necessary measure against strikes by "rogue states" such as Iraq and north Korea. In expressing disapproval of the announcement Russian presidential adviser and former defense minister Igor Sergeyev pointed out that the location of the system indicates that it is targeted on the former Soviet Union. "We cannot disregard the fact that elements of the U.S. missile defense system are being deployed in the north, not in the south, where the threat is coming from the so-called rogue countries," he said.

Meanwhile, the Patriot anti-missile system has been deployed in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and Israel. Researchers in the latter country have assisted in modifying the missiles, producing a new variant called the Arrow.

The Patriot was deployed in Israel a decade ago during the Gulf War. The missiles were supposed to deal with Iraqi Scud missiles, at the same time as Washington denied the Israeli Air Force the friend-or-foe codes that would have enabled it to strike Iraq without fear of crossing swords with U.S. and British planes. Israeli generals concluded that the Patriots had caused more damage than they prevented, by bringing the wayward Scuds down over populated areas.

Since then the missile has undergone further development. Nevertheless, as they prepare to invade Iraq, "Pentagon planners are focusing their attention on how best to find and destroy [Baghdad's] mobile Scud launchers before the missiles are fired, U.S. and private analysts say," reported Paul Richter in the *Los Angeles Times*.

The Army received 16 PAC-3 missiles—a full launcher load—in September. The Pentagon is authorized to initially produce 72 a year, with production increasing to 144 a year for a total of 1,159 interceptors.